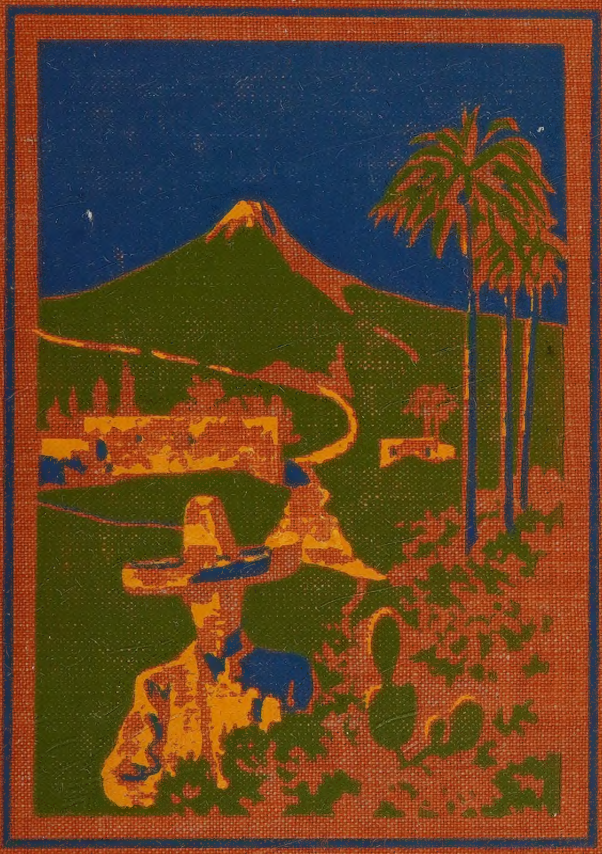
THE MAN WHO LIKES MEXICO



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THE MAN WHO LIKES MEXICO

A Mexican charro

THE MAN WHO LIKES MEXICO

THE SPIRITED CHRONICLE OF ADVENTUROUS WANDERINGS IN MEXICAN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

BY

WALLACE GILLPATRICK

ILLUSTRATED WITH PHOTOGRAPHS

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TO MY MEXICAN FRIENDS FROM WHOM I HAVE RECEIVED MUCH KINDNESS THIS BOOK IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

THE AUTHOR.

FOREWORD

During my residence in Mexico City I made the acquaintance of a young officer in the Mexican army, Colonel Victor H——, who was subsequently on mission in the United States and in Europe. I was introduced to him as "The Man Who Likes Mexico."

"If that is so," he said in English, "then I like you." And the acquaintance, thus begun, developed into an enduring friendship.

Americans who visit Mexico will not fail to discover much that is likable; and it seems only just to remark first on what is likable, deferring adverse comment until a careful observation of life and conditions shall have rendered intelligent criticism possible. For the rest, it is undeniable that we Americans are more favorably disposed towards the foreign visitor, who likes our country, than towards the one who begins by finding fault with us.

Mexico is proud of her civilization and of her culture; of her builders, painters, sculptors, musicians and men of letters. Among her early writers, she is proud of such names as Vetancurt, Medina, Padilla, Lizardi, Clavigero, Navarrete, Quintana Roo, Bustamante and Lucas Alaman; and since her literary renaissance, which

occurred during the last half of the nineteenth century, of Roa Bárcena, Orozco y Berra, Gutiérrez Otero, Guillermo Prieto, Altamirano, Acuña, Romero, Gutiérrez Nájara, Juan de Dios Peza, Ruiz de Alarcon, Riva Palacio, Justo Sierra, Dias Covarrubias, Diaz Mirón, Valenzuela, and Othon. Among the younger men are Gonzalez Obregón, Urueta, Nervo, Tablada, Campos, Davalos and a score of others. Mexico cannot understand the indifference to her culture on the part of the average American, within her gates, whose sole aim is apparently the acquisition of wealth. The educated Mexicans are familiar with the literary product of America, and our writers, especially our poets, are known, both in translation and in the original. An acquaintance with Mexican writers is highly desirable for resident Americans, and will be found of great value in the study of Mexican life and customs.

The journeys described in the following pages occurred during the first two years of a residence in Mexico of nearly six years. Mexico City was nearly always the starting-point, and it proved both pleasant and profitable to return occasionally to the Mexican Capital for rest and perspective. The traveler with leisure might well adopt a similar plan; and if the places here described are visited, the life and customs will be found but little changed.

The title of this volume is the name under which I wrote as correspondent for the *Mexican Herald,* and I desire to express my gratitude to the Editors, Man-

ager and Staff of that paper for their unfailing approval and assistance. I also wish to thank Mr. José Lupercio of Guadalajara, Mr. C. B. Waite of Mexico City, and the *Mexican Herald* for the use of photographs.

W. G.

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THE MAN WHO LIKES MEXICO

. . . Land of the Sun,—
Of palm, and pine, and blood-red cactus flower,—
Mysterious land,— I love thee: —

THE MAN WHO LIKES MEXICO

CHAPTER I

The Lure of Mexico: California a Stepping-Stone: Invitation to Visit a Mexican Mine: The Outfit: A Fortunate Meeting: Railroad Travel and Opinions of Fellow Travelers: The English Race Natural Fault-Finders: Arrival at Durango: A Vanishing Mexican Friend: Baths of Las Canoas: My First Bull-Fight: Preparations for a Long Journey: Over Mexico's Mountains on a Mule.

FROM boyhood I felt the lure of Mexico. Reared in California, where the romance of early Mexican days still lingers, and where the prodigality of nature and of life are in keeping with Mexican tradition, I ardently dreamed of this Spanish-American southland. California is a good stepping-stone to Mexico — at least it proved so for me. I had been living for several years in New England, when I received an invitation from an old California friend couched in the warm phraseology peculiar to Californians, asking me to visit him and his wife at his mines in Mexico. The mines were located, he informed me, in the State of Durango. To reach them from San Francisco, they took the boat for Mazatlan, and from Mazatlan rode on horses or mules for three days in the mountains, ascending as high as ten thousand feet above the sea. In his letter he

referred in a matter-of-fact way to *mozos* (guides), saddle-animals, pack-mules, army-saddles, rifles, fishing-tackle and other attractive impedimenta,— to sleeping on pine boughs by the camp-fire, to the delicious night air of the sierra, and to the delectable dishes prepared by the aforesaid mozos, who from all accounts were ubiquitous and useful persons.

My friend then went on to prescribe the route by which I should journey to this mysterious silver mine, which lay concealed in a remote and beautiful valley, in the heart of the Sierra Madre. It seemed that I must approach it from the opposite direction, for he was then on the Pacific coast and I on the Atlantic, with the mountains between us. I was to proceed immediately to Tennessee and there join a young Southern mining man, who after visiting his home was about to return to the famous mine La Candelaria, in San Dimas, Durango — about a day's ride from my destination.

My friend also advised me as to my outfit, which included a khaki riding-suit, a pair of high laced boots, a pair of wading-boots, heavy and thin underwear, several suits of overalls, woolen gloves, army blankets, a cloth cap, a rifle, a revolver, fishing-rod and flies, and a medicine-kit. All these I secured and the clothing and blankets I packed in a pair of horse-hide trunks, weighing about 150 pounds each. These proved useful throughout my journeys in Mexico, making a fair load for a pack-animal, and being easily adjusted and not hard on a mule's back. A well-chosen if abbreviated library of favorite authors, while it added to the railroad charge for excess baggage, proved an inestimable solace, not only during the year I passed in the isolated mining region, but throughout my five years' stay in Mexico.

Mexican mozo

I found my traveling companion an alert, able and kindly young Southerner, and after a few days' delightful hospitality in both Tennessee and Georgia, where he had numerous farewell visits to make and where he insisted on my accompanying him, we proceeded *via* New Orleans to Eagle Pass, crossed the Rio Grande to Ciudad Porfirio Diaz, and went from there by rail across the northern State of Coahuila and a strip of Zacatecas to the junction city of Torreon, and thence to Durango, a fine city of about 32,000 inhabitants, the capital of the state of the same name, and situated at the foot of the eastern slope of the Sierra Madre.

There were numbers of English-speaking men on the train, several being Americans, all of whom were returning to the mines. The concensus of opinion seemed to be that Mexicans did not like Americans, and my companion, whom I now addressed, at his request, as Bob, shared this opinion. My upbringing in cosmopolitan California had made me distinctly hopeful as to human friendliness, and while I listened to what was said, I kept my mind open for actual experience. I had known many Mexicans in California, and I fancied the same kindly nature I had recognized in them would be found in their cousins across the border.

As yet I scarcely could believe that I was in the land of Heart's Desire. The country was flat and uninteresting, not unlike New Mexico and Arizona, as seen from the car windows. English was spoken by my fellow-passengers; and, what was even more familiar, it often was employed in disparagement of Mexico and the Mexicans. Fault-finding is natural to the English race. When I inquired why they were returning to Mexico, they related fabulous tales of wealth and adventure that were quite past belief. I decided that I would believe

only what I saw, and I venture to counsel the reader, when visiting a foreign land, to do likewise.

At the railroad station in Durango we hired a coach drawn by a pair of sleek, black mules, and after turning our luggage over to a couple of *cargadores* or porters, drove to the hotel, where we were lodged in a spacious, sunny room, with French windows opening on the street, red-tiled floors, and three single iron beds placed in a row; the apartment having been retained by a Mexican associate of Bob's, who was to join our cavalcade and who now occupied one of the beds. Bob said the first thing to do was to go for a bath and accordingly led the way to the hotel entrance, where the coach was waiting for us. We got in, the coachman lashed the sleek mules into a gallop, and we set out for the baths of "las Canoas," which are housed in a long, low, white building, about ten-minutes' drive from the center of the city. The proprietor, a portly, benign-looking man, who was seated in the porch, greeted Bob affably. He then called a mozo (this term is generally applied throughout Mexico to a male servant), and the latter led us to a large room, with a window opening into a garden, where we could see orange trees and flowers. In the center of the room there was a huge tank, perhaps eight feet square and four feet deep, empty and spotlessly clean, with steps leading down to the bottom. The mozo brought fresh straw mats, two large cotton sheets, rough towels, a little toilet glass with fittings, soap and *zacate* (fiber), which does service as a sponge. The soap and zacate were in small, tin dishes which float on the water, and are thus near at hand when required. He next pulled out a wooden plug in the side of the tank and a torrent of water gushed in, filling the tank to the height of a man's waist ere we could divest ourselves of our

clothing. Bob jumped in without ado; but I paused on the top step and dipped in a wary toe to try the water. Finding it only a trifle cooler than body temperature, I too made the plunge and reveled in the soft, greenish-clear water, which carries iron and sulphur. All the cities of Mexico are favored with fine baths, but for delightful water and arrangements I commend "las Canoas" of Durango.

Returning to our hotel, where the small mules drew us at a gallop, we were in an excellent mood for dinner; and while it was good enough and everything deliciously flavored, I was amazed at the numberless meat courses and the great lack of vegetables. First came a soup, then rice with a meaty flavor, this being called "dry soup," next eggs in any style one preferred, and then meat, meat, meat, with different colored gravies and well-cooked, to be sure, but scarcely what one would expect in a hot climate and in the midst of prolific vegetation. Dinner ended with delicious *frijoles* (black beans), coffee, a sweet, and, I am glad to record, oranges and bananas.

The next day being Sunday, we went to the bull-fight. I was not consulted, our seats, like our beds, having been engaged weeks ago by this same obliging but disappearing friend of Bob's, who never retired until after we were asleep, nor awoke until long after we had arisen. I finally met him and was glad to thank him for his forethought and careful arrangement for our comfort; but beyond one or two fleeting conversations, our acquaintance progressed no further. Bob excused his constant absence by explaining that he was a *calavera* (sport).

And now for my first bull-fight: it was a strong, fierce, tense experience that comes back as vividly to-day as it

did — say the week after. It took me quite a week to recover a normal sense of discrimination. The Durango plaza was large and massively built. When we entered we found an immense crowd of people, from every social grade; the aristocrats, elegantly attired, agreeable in looks and manner, filled the boxes; the occupants of the first-class benches, characterized as *la Sombra,* or shady side, included hosts of Americans and Europeans; while the multitude thronged the sunny side of the arena called *el Sol,* and it was *el sol* indeed with all the blaze of a cloudless afternoon. And there, beneath the intense blue of the Mexican heavens, the sport that in more senses than one is tragedy was enacted. The band struck up "El Toreador," the pageant entered, and the fight began. A savage little black Mexican bull made his entrance, flaunting a gaudy ribbon from the tiny steel dart jabbed into his shoulder as he cleared the gate. The *picadores* on their wretched, blindfolded hacks began prodding him with lances. With his sharp horns he caught one of the shambling horses and disemboweled him. The picadores retired and the *banderilleros* performed graceful and daring acts, luring the bull to charge, then lightly swerving, to avoid his onslaught, and planting the *banderillos* in his neck as he lurched past. The multitude in *el Sol,* highly pleased, began shouting. The little bull made a swift rush, sprang into the air, all feet off the ground, got his forelegs over the first paling — at least five feet high, and plunged over it into the narrow lane between it and the audience, scattering the attendants in every direction. But he was driven back into the ring, and there he received the death-thrust from the sword of the *matador,* the star of the performance. A spike-team of white mules adorned with ribbons and bells then dashed in and

as rapidly out again, drawing the dead bull. The music struck up, another bull sprang into the arena, and the show went on. Seven bulls were killed. I can describe my state only as one of dazed excitement. What happened after we quitted the bull-ring I cannot recall. I felt exhausted and retired early, only to wake repeatedly with a sense of nightmare. The next morning, on waking, I had much difficulty in realizing that the scenes of the previous day were not a dream.

Bob now devoted himself to securing a mozo and animals for our journey. The friend, it seemed, could not tear himself away from the charming night-life of Durango; and while he continued to occupy his bed by day, I did not again meet him, clothed and in his right mind, so to speak. I cherish memories, however, of an affable and obliging man. Our preparations for the mountains I found intensely interesting. In the first place I must buy a mule for myself. Then my California friend, who will figure in these pages as Don Alfredo, that being his name in the Mexican mining regions, had commissioned Bob to purchase for him the best saddle-mule he could find, the Durango mules being famed for their easy pace. Bob, who was a judge of mules, secured a prize for $100 Mexican money. She was coal-black, slender as a thoroughbred, with an easy trot, a good running gait, and as gentle as the proverbial kitten. Her name was "Queen." The beast I chose was the next best to be had in the market. She was fairly good-looking, dark brown in color, and had an excellent gait, half-pace, half-singlefoot. She cost me $70 Mexican money. She had no name, it appeared, and though I called her "Rhea," and tried to cultivate her friendship, she seemed endowed with native distrust of the "Gringo"; and while she carried me patiently

for a year, she was as reserved at parting as when I first acquired her. These two mules were as unlike in character as any two human beings could possibly be. Bob now engaged as mozo a somewhat saturnine-looking party, who was reputed to be a good guide, a mule for the mozo to ride, another to carry our grub-box and blankets; and after purchasing our provisions and necessary cooking outfit, we were at last prepared to invade the fastnesses of the impregnable Sierras, which loomed purple in the distance, the white clouds floating about their summits, beyond which lay mystery and adventure.

Have you ever ridden over the mountains of Mexico on a mule? If not there is joy before you — provided that you love the mountains, and long days of brilliant sunshine, and cloudless, starlit nights. It goes without saying that the time for such a ride is the dry season, which begins in October and with few variations lasts until the ensuing May.

Choose a mule by all means — a mare makes the best saddle-animal — and after you have ridden her a day, you will feel absolute confidence in the creature. A Mexican mule takes no chances. She springs lightly over a heap of dead leaves on the trail, rather than risk a possibly concealed pitfall, and leaps from one boulder to another with the agility of a cat. If overtaken by darkness, you may drop your bridle-rein on your mule's neck, and be perfectly secure in her caution and judgment. With her nose close to the narrow and often dangerous trail, that you no longer see, she will follow it as unerringly as a dog follows the scent.

In the mountains, the heat is seldom oppressive save at midday. Then your mozo finds a cool spot, near a stream if possible, for your luncheon and siesta. Your mozo is nearly always a cheerful, obliging individual, of

sanguine temperament, trained to servitude and hardship, expecting little, yet accepting without effusiveness any little luxuries you may care to bestow. After a long day's ride, he unsaddles the animals, has a fire blazing in a jiffy, and cooks your supper; while you lie on the ground and stretch your tired legs, inhaling the grateful fumes of meat on the coals. You are ravenous, and for the moment supper is of more importance than anything else in life. If you have provided well, you are soon devouring a steak, broiled as only a mozo can broil, hot *tortillas* (corn cakes), frijoles (beans) and perhaps *tamales*. Then comes a steaming cup of black coffee, and with pipe or *cigarro* for company, you roll yourself in your blankets and lazily watch the stars, the campfire,— and listen to the wind in the trees until — you stretch yourself luxuriously with the feeling that you have been asleep and behold your mozo calmly preparing breakfast, while the animals, near at hand, are munching their corn. It is four o'clock. You have slept eight solid hours and must be off at the crack of dawn, in order that you may rest when the heat comes. You may have rolled in, more tired than ever before in your life. You awake, rested in every limb, feeling that you could run, leap, sing — so wonderful is this mountain air.

Then too — the pine woods, through which you ride for hours, frequently for days — there is magic in their balm for weary bodies and tired nerves. You will try to analyze the peculiar charm that pervades your entire journey. Perhaps it partly lies in the endless vista of mountains beyond, in the feeling that this free existence must go on forever. You gain a *cumbre* or summit, ten thousand feet above sea level, and gazing over miles of forest and meadow, you behold another mountain, its

crest enveloped in white mist, and you know that tomorrow you will tread its height. When it is gained, there are still more mountains before you, more beautiful in contour and color, and the charm never fails.

You may ride for days without meeting a human being, but now and again you hear your mozo singing, as he follows with the pack-animals, and you are never lonesome. Should you pass a *rancho,* you will find there fresh eggs, milk and delicious cheese and a roof for the night if you desire. The house and all it contains are at your service while you remain, and you have a struggle to make the owners accept a cent in return. Though almost invariably poor, these mountain folk have hospitality bred in the bone and a gentle, innate courtesy. I often found that a gift of coffee, tobacco, sugar and such luxuries were more acceptable and less mortifying to them than money. It seemed more like an exchange of kindnesses.

But mountain journeys, like all pleasant experiences, must end. Perhaps your goal is some ancient Spanish mine, long since abandoned, from which fabulous wealth was taken centuries ago, and which will yet make you rich beyond your wildest dreams. Such mines have been bought in Mexico for a song, and many more remain. But whether you gain a fortune or not, one good you have had past losing — the joy of long, health-giving days and restful nights; and their memory will remain with you and haunt you, till some fine day will see you again in the saddle, astride your nimble mule, bound for the mountain heights of sunny Mexico.

The inevitable delays which always attend the beginning of a journey in Mexico were not lacking in Durango, and it was ten o'clock before we were ready to start. Finally our mozo appeared with his pack-mule,

Getting supper

Don Alfredo

the grub-box and light traveling baggage were loaded and lashed in place with rawhide *reatas* or ropes, and Bob, mounted on the black mule, headed our cavalcade, with myself next and the mozo and pack-animal bringing up the rear.

The ascent began at the outskirts of the city, where the foot-hills led up gradually to the mountains. The beginning of the ride was hot and dusty, and by noon the heat was intense. At one o'clock we crossed a shallow *barranca* with a sluggish stream, and Bob called a halt for luncheon. As there was no shade, we sat on the banks of the stream in the broiling sun, while the mozo started a fire, and cutting off a huge chunk of beef, he impaled it on a pointed stake and began singeing it in the flames. I was just owning to an inward feeling of disappointment at the inept culinary efforts of the mozo, when Bob began openly to express his disapproval, and declared that he himself could cook far better. He accordingly produced some bacon and a frying-pan, and also brewed some excellent coffee. With the addition of rolls we made a meal, while the mozo, left to his own devices, devoured the beef to the last morsel. His bloodshot eye and sullen manner now excited Bob's suspicion, and coming on him unexpectedly, while feeding the mules, he found him drinking *mezcal* from a quart bottle. As it was nearly empty, there was nothing to do but make the best of a bad bargain — and this he proved. A more surly dog I never encountered; indeed all the other mozos I subsequently knew were quite up to what I had heard of them in excellence.

In mountain travel, distances are not calculated in miles but in hours or days, this resulting in considerable vagueness as to the chance of arriving anywhere. From

the barranca to the rancho where we intended to sleep that night was, according to the mozo, a matter of four hours. At the expiration of four hours, however, no rancho was in sight, and we rode for two hours more before we arrived, it being then nearly eight o'clock. This indefiniteness as to time and distance, at first exasperating, finally becomes a matter of course; and I may say I have never yet arrived at any place in the mountains at the time the mozo predicted.

The owner of the rancho was a fat, good-natured man, who received us pleasantly, assured us his house was ours, and invited us to join him at supper. We were glad enough to avail ourselves of his hospitality and though his beds were without springs we were asleep almost as soon as our heads touched the pillows, which were of wool and stuffed as hard as rocks. The first day of a journey is always trying and after nine hours in the saddle I was weary to exhaustion. To my surprise I awoke in the morning without a particle of fatigue or soreness, and this has always been my experience in the mountains.

On this, our second day, we made an early start. We had a long ride ahead, to make a favorable camp for the night, and Bob set the pace at a spanking trot. I had slung my rifle at one side of my saddle and my fishing rod at the other, and felt rather pleased with my outfit; but after we had ridden three hours, during which we had made good headway, I discovered that my fishing rod had become loosed from its moorings and disappeared. It was a fine, jointed rod and I did not want to lose it; so shouting to Bob that I would soon overtake him, I turned my mule about and began racing back over the trail; but not a sign of the rod did I see. The thought that every moment I was putting a greater dis-

tance between the others and myself was not comforting, especially as I knew nothing of the country and did not speak enough Spanish to ask a direction even if I met a living soul, which I did not. Giving up the search I started to overtake Bob and the mozo, and now I observed, for the first time, that frequently the trail forked, so that I was in doubt which one to follow. Fortunately no other animals had passed since our own and I was able to make out the hoof-marks in the trail and after two hours' hard riding I overtook them. A year later, while paying a visit to a mine owned by Americans, the storekeeper handed me a note scrawled on a piece of wrapping paper, and addressed to "Señor Americano," asking if by any chance it was for me. It ran as follows: "I found on the Durango trail a bag and it had four yellow sticks and a gun-wiper; you can stop at my rancho when you go back and get it by paying for the same." There was no signature, and while the storekeeper, who was a Mexican, knew the man and told me where his rancho was, he did not know his name or nationality,—he asserted, however, that he was an *extranjero* (foreigner). Another year passed, and on my way out from the mines I passed by the rancho and inquired for the extranjero. The place was occupied by Mexicans, and to all my inquiries they placidly answered "*Quien sabe?*" I only learned that he had gone away and he doubtless took the "four yellow sticks and the gun-wiper" with him.

The second night shortly after sundown we reached a fine camping place in the pines, beside a clear stream. The mozo, who was suffering the aftermath of his spree, was still in a partial stupor. Bob, therefore, constituted himself chef once more, while he set the mozo to collecting dry logs for the night fire. We were now at an

altitude of about seven thousand feet and at this height the air cools with great rapidity after sunset. After supper Bob piled some big logs on the fire and then showed me how to make my bed; in this operation every available article is utilized, including saddle and saddle-cloths. The mules after eating their corn, were hobbled and allowed to graze at will, and we were glad to crawl into our beds and go to sleep.

About midnight I was awakened by the cold, which, despite the fire, was intense. There was no wind, and the heavens were bright with enormous stars, that seemed very near, with a subsidiary spangling of small stars that made one think of diamond dust. Notwithstanding my army blankets and a thick rug I was shaking with the cold and Bob, waking at the same instant, proposed that we move our beds together and thus obtain double covering from our blankets. This we did, and with the additional warmth of our bodies we were soon comfortable again and slept soundly. The mozo, who had only his ordinary *zarape* or blanket, had wrapped it about his head and mouth, and was crouching over the fire.

The next day we descended several thousand feet and found the valley intensely hot. Bob had been at considerable tension from the beginning of our journey, and the hot weather together with the sullen mozo were irritating him greatly. While our acquaintance had been too brief for an exchange of confidences, I gathered that he held a position of trust at the mines, and that after a prolonged absence, due partly to previous illness, he was anxious to be again at his post. As he neared his destination his anxiety increased. In his early twenties, of Southern family and with the nervous, eager temper imparted by Celtic race, very ambitious and excited by the lure of the mines, at the period when a young man's

blood courses swiftly, he had been drawn into the feverish business until it wholly possessed him.

I had never before realized the relentless cruelty of this pursuit of gold — or rather of silver, which is twice as bad, because you must obtain twice as much. True, I was also bound for the mines; but, whether it be for good or ill, the pursuit of gold has ever failed to absorb my attention for long. Sometimes it seems a defect of character, but I try to analyze it in vain. Not that I do not want gold and what gold can buy; but life is so rich, so full, so insistent — and gold is so elusive! It is as though life were forever pressing, full-handed, its treasure upon us — the beauty of the world, love, friendship; while gold, which offers itself grudgingly, can not confer any of the gifts that life so freely bestows.

I could not but feel sad about Bob, so young and generous, with all his bright day-dreams depending on one thing only — the acquisition of gold. For him the purple, distant mountains had no meaning, save that perhaps they concealed rich veins of ore. The clear, leaping streams were good for one thing alone — to turn a turbine wheel in an ore mill. The sunset had no charm — for it came too soon, forcing us into camp when he would be farther on the way. The boy fretted and fumed and goaded the ugly mozo into a fury, and the latter, taking it out on the pack-mule, lashed the poor beast until she dropped in her tracks and refused to get up again. So here we were in a pretty fix,— with mule and grub-box on the ground.

Fortunately at this moment we heard a whistle and then the sound of hoofs and a ranchman appeared, mounted on a stocky roan horse with a thick, long black mane and tail. Bob immediately asked him if he wanted to sell. The ranchman said he did not, but so insistent

was Bob and so tempting the roll of money he flourished before the man's eyes, the latter began to hesitate and finally said he would take seventy dollars for the horse, which Bob promptly counted out and gave him. The mozo's saddle was now transferred to the roan, the grub-box and blankets to the other mule, and the pack-mule, which still lay on the ground, was commended to the care of the ranchman, whose rancho was not far off, and who promised to get the tired beast on its feet and care for it until the mozo should return and claim it. Bob seemed highly pleased with his new purchase. He had the Southerner's love of horse-flesh, and he now recalled the old saying about the staying powers of a roan or a gray. This beast had an ugly mouth, and when the mozo mounted him he stood up on his hind legs and pawed the air. It was now the mozo's turn to be pleased and the result of this horse trade was an improvement in the spirits of the entire party.

Bob now proposed that as we had lost so much time and it was desirable we should make a rancho for the night, we should content ourselves with a handful of provender from the grub-box and push on. He said we had still a long ride to the rancho, and I readily acquiesced. As for the mozo, he was as pleased with the fiery little roan as a child with a toy; and if he ate anything between breakfast and supper I did n't see him. Eating seems a matter of chance rather than a regular system with a mozo. If it so happens, he eats three meals a day. If it does n't happen, he bides his time, and then tucks away enough to make up for the meals he has missed. I never heard a Mexican mozo emit the slightest complaint about discomfort or privation, though I often have seen him suffer both.

The sun went down and signs of the rancho there

were none. The mozo calmly averred that it was "just over there," pointing to the next hill ahead of us; but as he had said this of the four preceding hills, and each had presented nothing but more hills in perspective, I began to think he knew no more about the proximity of the rancho than we did.

We were anxious to arrive though it was to be our last night together, the rancho lying at the point where our trails divided. Bob would keep straight on the main trail, arriving at the Candelaria mine the next night; while I was to branch off on to a comparatively untraveled one, which should lead me to the Huahuapan district. Before we left Durango, Bob telegraphed his mine, asking them to send a mozo to the rancho to act as my guide to Huahuapan; it being necessary to engage a mozo who belonged in that part of the mountains and who knew the route to this mysterious valley which was my destination.

It was now quite dark and I was beginning to fear we had missed the trail, when on crossing another low hill we saw a blazing fire straight ahead and heard a most amazing sound; it was nothing more nor less than the squeaking of a fiddle accompanied by the monotonous beating of a drum. We could now distinguish the low outline of buildings and several figures about the fire. It is the custom in these parts to build a bonfire at night in the *corral* before the ranch-house; and it is not at all a bad custom, affording as it does an opportunity to take the fresh air and enjoy the blaze at the same time.

Arriving at the fire, we learned that the owner of the rancho was away on a journey, and the place was in charge of the Indian *peones*. The fiddler, it seemed, was a stray nomad who had stopped over night, and was doubtless paying for his entertainment with his tunes.

The drum, the peones told us, had been left at the rancho, quien sabe how, why, or by whom, and one of their number had the happy inspiration of beating it to accompany the fiddler. With the equanimity that obtains in Mexico, neither of the performers stopped for one moment on our account; and the effect produced by the weird tune and the incessant, dull note of the drum was strange and savage. Add to this the motionless forms of the other peones and the huge wavering shadows cast by the fire, and you have a strange scene, which was not lessened by the arrival, from out the darkness, of our cavalcade.

I had already begun to have the experience of wondering whether anything really was strange after all; and while Mexico in general is conducive to this, the mountains are especially so. I believe that these mountain people are chastened and humbled by the stupendous expressions of nature which always surround them. The peones, while perfectly apathetic to us, made no objection to our cooking our meal at the fire and sleeping in a small, dungeon-like outhouse. The main dwelling was locked and barred and not to be opened on any account until the master's return.

The serious thing was the failure of my mozo to put in an appearance, the only possible explanation being that Bob's wire did not go through; but this did not seem nearly so strange to me as that it should have gone through. There was something incredible in the thought of telegraph wires crossing those stupendous mountains; and while Bob assured me that they did so, I extracted from him the admission that the wires were down a good part of the time and that they probably were down now.

He also told me a diverting if somewhat disturbing

A long journey

Hunting in Durango

tale about the mails. He said the mail bag was carried by special mozos, between the mines and the nearest post-offices, which were usually the trivial distance of from two to three days' journey. The mozo went on foot. Why? Because he knew short cuts that no mule could travel. On mule-back it would take twice as long. Not many months since, Bob said, he despatched the mail mozo with a large batch of correspondence, and as he was gone much longer than he should be, he sent another mozo to look for him. The second mozo came across the first, asleep in the woods and very drunk. Beside him was the rifled mail-bag with the remains of letters he had opened, not apparently with justifiable intent. Only a small portion of the letters were there, however, and it developed that, growing tired of his innocent pastime, he had thrown the balance into the river. I must add in justice to the tribe of mozos that my letters were carried by one for more than a year, and that I never missed a piece of mail to my knowledge.

While I was spreading my blankets on the dirt floor of the small dungeon referred to, the music stopped. Presently Bob entered and remarked that he had paid the fiddler and the drummer liberally and that as the former said he knew the Huahuapan trail, he had engaged him to act as my guide, for the moderate sum of six dollars. I begged him to call me when he awoke the following morning, so that I might take leave of him then, and also start away from the rancho at the same time that he did. That nothing impressed me any longer as strange or unusual was indicated by my not giving a second thought to my new guide, though I was aware that Bob had never set eyes on him before. The mountains, I think, had normalized me too and I slept peacefully.

CHAPTER II

A Ride in the Dark: Misgivings: The Fiddler-Guide: Wolf-Face: No Stop for Dinner: Beautiful Mountain Scenery: Ten Hours of Suspense: Wayside Crosses: Valley of Huahuapan: Reunion with Friends: Work and Play: Life in a Mexican Pueblo: A Beautiful Box: A Bad Peon.

I AWOKE to a sense of suffocation and of foul air charged with the odors of mule trappings, saddles and blankets, with a lurking substratum of smells that attach to unventilated rooms which have been slept in by countless human beings. The mozo was performing a muffled tattoo on the door. I knew his voice though his words were unintelligible, and lighting a match, found it was four o'clock. Bob was sleeping as sound as a log and I had to shake him. The poor boy was drugged with sleep and bad air. I have never gotten over feeling a sort of pity for children and young people in the throes of sleep. There is something pitiable in their struggles to break the lethargy that holds them, and that doubtless is a response to their nervous and physical needs.

Bob suddenly roused himself, sprang up and began folding his blankets; we had few preparations to make, for anticipating a hurried departure, we had thrown ourselves down without removing our clothing, and with our boots on. Opening the door, we found the mozo waiting for our saddles, and I discovered that the mules were there too,— that is I felt and heard them. It was pitch dark, the only light being shed from a blazing

pine-knot held by a motionless Indian. Bob hurriedly shook hands and bade me good-by, promising that we should meet soon. Then he got on his mule — the mozo was already in the saddle — there was the quick scurry of unshod hoofs, and the party was swallowed up by the black forest.

I was aware of further saddling operations under way, and my mule was dragged, rather than led, to where I was standing. It seemed ungracious in her, now that she was the only remaining acquaintance left me, to snort and pull back at sight of me. I began to feel very much alone. The mysterious personage who brought my mule had his neck and chin muffled in a zarape and I presumed he was the fiddler who was to act as my guide.

It occurred to me that our grub-box was on the pack-mule and that the pack-mule was off with Bob. The ranch-house showed no light or sign of life. I appealed to the Indian, who remained motionless supporting the torch, and having no Spanish at my command, began talking to him in English. His true propensity to act as caryatid was now apparent, for apart from rolling his eyes, he gave no evidence of hearing. My common sense told me that what I needed was the Spanish name for some article of food. At first I thought in vain. Then I recalled California, and with it came the word *tamales*. Again his eyes rolled but now he shook his head. This was encouraging for he evidently understood. Again I thought, and again recovered a word — *tortillas*. Who that knows California has not seen these round, wafer-like corn-cakes? At this the Indian came to life, grunted something in the folds of his zarape, and shuffled off to the ranch-house. Returning, he thrust into my hands a clammy, soggy mass which proved to be a number of

huge tortillas, about eight inches in diameter and nearly half an inch thick. I learned later that this variety is known as *gordas,* the name deriving from the adjective gorda, which means thick or fat, and that it is employed on journeys. In my gratitude I gave the Indian what loose silver I had, and wrapping the gordas in my bath-towel, I stowed them in my saddle-bags, mounted my reluctant mule, and motioned the fiddler to lead the way. The latter, who as yet had not spoken, got on his own beast, and without turning his head said something that was evidently a farewell to the Indian, who responded. The Indian's voice, while monotonous, was not unpleasant; but the fiddler's voice — how to qualify it! Harsh, cracked — no, it was canine, between a snarl and a whine. I began to feel curious to see the owner of that unhuman voice.

My mule followed the fiddler's beast, nose to crupper, for she was strange to those mountains and as yet there was no sign of dawn. The air was cool and delicious with the night-odors of the woods, and as it dispelled the poisonous emanations I had breathed during the night, my mind grew clear and alert. The consolation that Nature gives to men was now revealed to me in an extraordinary way. I knew from their odor that we were in the pines; their branches brushed my face, sometimes not very gently; again my knee was grazed by a tree-trunk, my mule being unable in the dark to gauge the required leeway. There was something friendly about those pine trees and while I felt the strangeness of the illimitable, vast mountains, I experienced comfort in being among those trees, which were like the trees of my native land.

I was eager for daybreak, and was tempted to revamp a certain aged maxim to the strain, " A looked-for dawn

never comes." It came, by imperceptible changes, from dark to dusk — then gray. The rainy season was close at hand and the sky was overcast with rain clouds. The first light was suffused with mist, and my first view of the fiddler was as through a veil of gauze. The apparition revealed to me was certainly a strange one. He was easily six feet when he stood upright. His mount was a small, scrawny, buckskin mare, with a black wisp of a tail. He sat her with a forward crouch, and his stirrups barely cleared the ground. Even then he rode with a high stirrup, just resting the toes of his huge bare feet, while his legs flopped in unison with every move of his wiry little mustang. He made me think of nothing so much as a great wolf on horseback. Then he turned his head clear round, without swerving his body, and looked at me, and I saw what I may describe, without exaggeration, as a wolf-face. He was not dark but yellow, horribly scarred by pox, with a reddish mane of hair and scant, scrubby whiskers depending from neck and chin. His disgusting mouth was toothless, save for isolated and prodigiously long, projecting fangs. But the worst of all were his eyes,— narrow, slit-like, with blood-red rims,— not cruel nor vindictive; for an instant I was puzzled, then it came over me like a flash — they were not human! They were shallow, alert, watchful, like the eyes of a dog or a wolf.

I think I know a man by his eyes; it is there I look for revelations, whether good or bad. And as I believe in the saving grace in almost every human being, I am willing to take a chance with a man. But when I encounter, in the head of a man, eyes that lack the human light, I am filled with doubt and distrust; for there seems nothing to take hold of. Such were the eyes of my guide. Several times he turned and looked

at me, and although I nodded to him with the hope of establishing relations, he made no sign nor sound.

It was now broad day. The sun appeared above the mountains to the east, and it became very hot. I felt as though freed from a sort of spell or enchantment, which in my case had induced a previous sense of contentment and supreme trust. I began to take stock of my situation, with a rapid survey of the events of the past two weeks.

I had taken train at Boston and journeyed to the Mexican border with the usual railway train environment. Bob's society had added a piquant element, and his *savoir faire* in Mexico had made the transition easy for me. Again in the mountains, Bob taking all as a matter of course, I had done the same. But last and principally, there was a matter-of-course finality pertaining to Mexico's psychology. This affects every one sooner or later. Obviously it had affected me sooner; and I found myself in the heart of a great wilderness, journeying I knew not whither, in the wake of the most repulsive and fearsome man I had ever encountered. I realized what a fool I had been to accept for a guide one who was not known even at the rancho; and while I wished I had stuck to Bob, I did not blame him. With the thoughtlessness of youth he had seized on the first way out of our dilemma. I, being his senior, should have employed ordinary caution. I resolved that I would make the best of the situation, and give Wolf-Face no hint of my uneasiness. From that instant, while I assumed an assured demeanor, I never for a second relaxed my vigilance.

I was aware that our order of march was wrong; for in Mexico the mozo or guide takes the rear: but I determined that Wolf-Face should never get behind me.

He displayed a dangerous-looking revolver in his belt, and also a long, leather-encased knife. I did not doubt he was an adept with either or both. I cudjeled my brain for some Spanish mandatory word, thinking that for the sake of morale I should give an occasional order. He was crossing a tiny, clear rivulet, which cut the trail, and my intense thirst made me involuntarily cry, "*Agua!*" He turned and I held up my drinking cup. I can see him now, as he slid off his mustang and came slinking back along the trail after the cup. Swiftly crouching he filled it and as he handed it, removed his hat with his left hand and fawned against my mule, leering up at me with his shallow eyes. I knew somehow that he would try for the rear, and when he cringed again and motioned for me to pass ahead, I had another inspiration. "*Andale!*" I said in a bored voice. Bob used to say "Andale!" at minute-intervals to the Durango coachmen. It really means "walk!" but it is the common mandate for "hurry!" At this he scrambled astride his mustang and went on, looking back repeatedly, as though he feared I would turn and vanish. But I had no such intention. My revolver was close at my hand and so was my rifle, and I knew I could hold my own so long as I kept him in the lead.

I thought of the long distance separating me from civilization, as represented by Durango. For three days we had been journeying into the mountains, and now, on the fourth, the country was the wildest I had seen. Still it was beautiful, with a savage, awe-inspiring beauty. The thread-like trail, which must have been long abandoned, lay midway along the side of precipitous cliffs, whose heights towered thousands of feet overhead, and whose declivities fell in almost sheer descent thousands of feet below. The rock formations, of red sandstone,

were equal in grandeur to those of Colorado, and for long intervals their imposing splendor, enhanced by the majesty of the pine forests and the intense blue of the heavens, made me forget my uneasiness. Then I would encounter the stare of those shallow eyes. They seemed to say, "Keep it up as long as you can. You will wear out in the end!"

While the trail had been long in disuse, I saw small wooden crosses at intervals, marking the spot where a death had occurred. I had heard that on these mountain trails it was usually a death of violence — from shooting or with the knife. There came to my mind a story I had heard at the hotel in Durango of an American who, while prospecting for mines in these mountains, became separated from his companions. They found his body, weeks later, with his revolver lying near his hand. I concluded that my case was not so bad as his, for Wolf-Face, at least, knew where we were going.

The sun was now high overhead. Wolf-Face stopped at another small stream, and began with clawing gestures to simulate eating or rather tearing food. He also pointed to a slight recess off the trail where we might dismount, it being his obvious wish to stop for dinner. For an instant I wavered, being half-famished; but my distrust was strong. With a peremptory "Andale!" I motioned him on; and on he went, with occasional furtive, backward glances that taxed my composure. I had neglected my watch the night before, so even this remnant of ordinary existence was denied me; but I judged from the position of the sun it was about two o'clock. As I had not yet eaten a mouthful, I drew forth a huge gorda and tried to eat.

Over Mexico's mountains on a mule

Sharpening the drills

It was coarse, cold, and unsavory; but I was faint for food, and forced myself to swallow. I now thought of my flask, which was a parting gift from friends. It was filled with *tequila,* the native brandy made from the root of the *maguey.* Until then I had scarcely tasted it, but I filled the cup to the brim, and as I drained the fiery liquor I thought of my friends. The stuff put life into me, and what with another gorda to stop the burning and another draught to wash down the gorda, I managed to revive the inner man.

Wolf-Face now performed the first human act I had observed. He had watched me attentively and no doubt noted my flask. Coming to another rivulet, he alighted on the trail, and held out his hand for my drinking-cup. The water was ice-cold and delicious. After drinking, I filled the cup with tequila and gave it to him. He took it at one gulp, but after it, he stood almost erect, and for the first time I saw in him the semblance of a man. Immoral was it,—and unethical? I have naught to say in extenuation, except that I was determined to win.

At what I presumed to be about five o'clock, the sun passed below the mountain rim, and my heart sank with it. Night would come — not rapidly — but it would come. Wolf-Face was gazing back again. Again he clawed the air, but now he was pointing. From the wide, free sweep of his arm I saw he was pointing over immeasurable distance to something far below in the valley. Wild hope sprang up in my breast and I peered into the valley. At last I distinguished something like a shining, silver ribbon. Surely that must be the little river! And beside it, I could make out rectangular, brown objects. The roofs of adobe huts of course!

It must be — it was — "Huahuapan!" barked Wolf-Face excitedly. It was the first sound he had uttered all day.

The trail now made an abrupt turn down the side of the mountain, which was covered with dense chaparral, and the huts were lost to view. Soon we came to the crest of a slight rise, preparatory to another descent, and I saw them again. From then on I had occasional cheering glimpses of the pueblo, where I hoped my friends awaited me; and each time the huts appeared larger. The trail was precipitous and dangerous, but my mule, whatever her shortcomings, was sure-footed; and on that perilous ride she won my confidence which she never forfeited later by either stumbling or falling. It was two hours after we sighted the pueblo when we gained the floor of the valley, forded the stream, which proved to be a foaming torrent reaching to my mule's belly, and some thirty feet across, and entered the small, ruined pueblo of Huahuapan, where I received a welcome from my friend Don Alfredo and his wife, truly Californian in its affectionate fervor.

Being but human, I now made light of the difficulties through which I lately had passed, and even refrained from mentioning my distrust of the fiddler. Indeed I scarcely gave him a thought in the pleasure and wonder of this meeting. My friends had started from San Francisco, I from Boston, and after journeying three thousand miles on opposite sides of the continent, our routes had converged and at last met in this isolated, semi-savage pueblo, four and a half days on mule-back from a steamboat or a railroad, with *cordones* or ranges, ten thousand feet high, dividing us from both. As I am a truthful man, I will confess that we were led on this hard and perilous journey by the prospect of untold

riches in the old, abandoned mines of the Huahuapan district.

Don Alfredo and his wife had reached the pueblo several weeks before my arrival, and I was amazed to find them engaged in living and working in genuine American fashion. He had already sampled and assayed the ore from the various old workings, and had thirty odd peones in two different prospects, which he said we would take a look at on the next morning.

Doña Marciana, as the people styled her, had been busily employed in making a home. The first requisite was a roof, but this was hard to find in a place where roofs were, as a rule, in the last stages of collapse. Fortunately a whole one was found and the owner was willing to rent. It covered one enormous room, plastered outside and in with adobe mud; the floor was adobe and there was one window with wooden bars and a door. She had never thought much of whitewash before, but one learns to appreciate the humblest agents, when they are hard to get. To obtain whitewash, an Indian had to be despatched into the mountains with burros to fetch the lime. It took him two days. Then he had to mix the stuff and make a sort of mop to daub it on with, which took another day. Thus a week passed, but at the end the room was snow white from base to ceiling, and no *sala,* frescoed by a master, was ever hailed with more delight. The room was large, some twenty by forty feet. One end was converted into a kitchen. There was an American cookstove, and when its fame went abroad, all the women of the pueblo came and crouched about it in mute admiration. Until then they had held off, but the cooking machine of the white woman was more than their curiosity could withstand. The center was the dining-room, with a table

covered with enamel cloth, and the other end served for a bedroom. Among the unwelcome visitors the people told her she might expect were *pulgas* (fleas) *chinches* (bedbugs) both with wings and without, *alacranes,* tarantulas, scorpions, centipedes and *sancudas* (mosquitoes). Accordingly the bed was provided with a stout netting and each foot stood in a can of *petroleô.* There was no floor covering, beyond a mat near the bed. An adobe floor grows hard and smooth with constant sprinkling and sweeping. The window was left uncovered, save for a mosquito netting. There were four blank, white walls and these she converted into things of beauty. Her friends had already begun sending magazines and pictorials, and in due time these arrived, borne over the mountains on the shoulder of a peon, who declared the American's *correspondencia* was too heavy.

In this day of elaborate illustration, given a plenty of papers and magazines, a good white background, and an eye for the beautiful, and wall decoration is assured. It was a delightful room. The guitar and mandolin had a corner to themselves; there were good-looking, straight-legged oak chairs covered with hide, and hammocks hung just outside the door, where burros and pigs came perilously near.

Being worn with my travels I soon inquired for my bed, and Don Alfredo led me to the assay office, where I was to sleep. We left Doña Marciana engaged in the remarkable enterprise, in Mexico, of making American bread; and to my knowledge for a year, that camp was never without it. Of course she had Indian servants, but it takes time to teach the Indian.

But Indian women can teach as well. From them she learned to do a wonderful sort of lace work, finer than

The pet burro

An old church made into an American home

the finest cobwebs. She painted a little, read a great deal, and attended religiously to her large correspondence. Writing to one's friends gets to be a religion in lonely places. At first the mail came once a week, and its coming was anxiously awaited. Then the rains came, the Indian who brought it had to make a tremendous detour to avoid the torrents, and its arrival became a fortnightly event. That Indian mail carrier stood high in Doña Marciana's favor. When he came, wet to the skin, but with a fat sack of letters and papers on his back, he must first have hot coffee and something to eat, before she would consent to distribute the mail. Every letter was worth its weight in gold. Why can't we realize, who love to receive letters, that one from us means just as much to somebody else?

Doña Marciana loved pets. She had a mule, a trick burro, a cow, several dogs and a pair of rabbits, besides doves and chickens. But the mountains abound in coyotes, foxes, opossums, hawks, snakes and gigantic lizards, and every one has a fondness for young doves and chickens. So she learned to shoot a rifle; and many were the trophies that adorned her walls, recalling the death of various marauders despatched by her own hand. Then she took photographs: amateurs, who have every convenience at hand for their work, can fancy what photography means, in a spot where *hypo* is precious as diamond dust and developer must be used again and again; where every drop of water is carried from the river on women's shoulders, and where a dark room can only be obtained by waiting for a dark night.

The people contributed to her amusement. Occasionally the women assembled and went in solemn procession to visit her. A dozen would file in and range themselves about the room, crouching on the floor, when there were

no chairs or boxes left to offer. There they sat, devouring every article in sight with their eyes, occasionally exchanging a whispered word or two, and then took their departure, as solemnly as they had come. At first, the intercourse between the hostess and her guests was limited to the ceremonious handshaking; but she eventually came to understand their odd dialect, which is a curious corruption of Spanish. They showed their imitative genius in trying in their rude way, to copy her clothing, and soon every woman among them rejoiced in an apron, which had hitherto been unknown. There was also a great demand for shoes, and many a dusky matron suffered untold torture, crowding her sturdy feet into wretched, high-heeled, pointed-toed, shiny Mexican shoes, that made her hobble where before she had glided, nimble as a cat. These luckily were discarded, when the women went, night and morning, to bring water from the river, tripping lightly over the sharp rocks, with a huge *olla* of water deftly balanced on the head, or held on one shoulder.

Doña Marciana had in her possession one article, that the people regarded as a sort of fetish. It was a small, highly polished medicine chest. Shortly after her arrival, a woman who had been very ill, was cured by a remedy taken from that chest. News of the magic went abroad and it was said that the *cajita bonita* (beautiful little box) held a sure cure for every ill that flesh was heir to. The Indians themselves still preserve considerable knowledge of medicinal plants. In fact there is not a weed nor a flower to which they do not assign some virtue. This, they will tell you, is good for headache; this for a cough; this flower cures snake-bite, and the leaves of that tree will stop bleeding. The people of the pueblo, however, forsook their own medicines, when

the fame of the cajita bonita went abroad. Every man, woman or child, with an ache or pain came to Doña Marciana to solicit *medicina*. Now medicine, in the mountains of Mexico, is even more precious than hyposulph, and one never knows when it may be needed badly. She was willing to give if the case was serious, and always kept a stock of lint and bandages on hand in the event of an accident in the mines; but this perpetual cry for medicina was out of all reason. Finally she hit on a plan. She adopted the water cure. When a man came with a sprain, she sent him to hold the injured member in the river. Hot water was prescribed for this ache, and cold water for that. The patients obeyed, and almost always found relief. It was most conducive to cleanliness and a vast saving in medicina. The most remarkable cure was of a man, apparently in the last stages of consumption, and filthy beyond words. He was advised to bathe in the river and told that if he bathed often enough, he would get well. Soon afterwards, he was seen in the river. The next day and the next found him still bathing, and it got so that at any time of day he could be found, soaking in some shallow pool. Strange as it may seem, he began to get better. He ate more, took on flesh, and in a month was as able to work as any peon about the place.

What with the water cure and the cajita bonita, which was resorted to in extreme cases, Doña Marciana came to be greatly revered by the people, and many were the humble offerings they brought her. When there was a dance and the girls and young men were all assembled, they came to her door with lighted torches; and the giver of the *baile* led each girl up in turn to salute her. Then they went and danced till daybreak. Sometimes she would signify her wish to see one of their dances,

and a young man would bring his *novia* (sweetheart) and together they would dance the *jarabe* till both were exhausted. Or perhaps she would request one of her favorite pieces, and they would sit in the moonlit corral, strumming guitar and mandolin, until they were surrounded by dark forms. The women would come and crouch on the ground, with their children in their arms. The men would stand motionless in the shadow. Not a sound disturbed the performance except an adventuresome pig perhaps, or a sad-voiced burro, protesting from the mountain-side.

It is truly said that the woman is the natural homemaker. But Doña Marciana, it seemed to me, had more to make than the woman usually has. She not only made a home, but in her mysterious woman-way she filled it with happiness, which overflowed and got into the homes of the people. I have no doubt that an appreciable factor in her plan was her insistence, in this outlandish place which was five days from a yeast-cake, on constantly providing her household with American bread.

The morning after my arrival, Don Alfredo invited me to a swim before breakfast, telling me I had only to don a pair of overalls over my pajamas, and take my underclothing along. I found the pueblo even more dejected in appearance than it had seemed the night before. There were not over three hundred souls in all, and the early abandonment of the mines, with the ensuing misery, had induced in the people a dull and hopeless apathy. Our advent had somewhat aroused them, and we had already employed over thirty of their men. They were civil in their greetings, but for any outward expression on their part, we might always have lived among them. This again was Mexico's psychology. A plunge in the river, which was crystal-clear and very

The living-room

The table was covered with enamel cloth

cold, the sun not having yet touched it, proved a fine tonic. Again I experienced the complete refreshment of nerves and body imparted by Mexico's mountains. We breakfasted hurriedly, for our mules were waiting at the door, and before us was the never-failing thrill of a first look at the face of the mine. Many a rich bonanza, ere now, has been opened up by the night shift.

The scene that met my eyes, as we quitted the pueblo on our mules, was inspiring as the town itself was depressing. The valley which lay five thousand feet above the sea was perhaps a mile long, and enclosed by pine-clad mountains, whose mean altitude was about ten thousand feet. On their heights appeared, amid the glistening pines, such wondrous formations in red sandstone as to give at first the impression that they were fashioned by man. The intense blue of the heavens, the fragrant, balmy air, and the profusion of bright birds and flowers made the valley seem a paradise. And beyond all this scenic enchantment was the ever-present dream of the mines, with their illimitable promise of riches. This was the dream that cast its glamour over the beautiful valley, where the very light seemed golden. After an hour's ride we reached the tunnel, where the men were at work. A pleasurable excitement was in the air. Soon the foreman, who was an American, appeared with a broad smile and told Don Alfredo that the last blast had opened up a vein of high-grade ore. He was as happy as possible and wanted to wager that an assay would show it to be very rich metal, with a high percentage of gold. The peones, too, had caught the infection and laughed and sang, their lithe, nude bodies glistening with sweat as they toiled from the mine, bearing on their backs great leather sacks filled

with waste. This they emptied on the dump and trotted in for more. The peones, like all the workmen, knew that rich mines meant a good living for them and their families.

Leaving our mules, we were provided by the foreman with lights, and with him traversed the long tunnel until we came to the face, where the *barrateros* were drilling with steel *barras* or drills, preparatory to putting in another charge of dynamite. These men were of higher skill and intelligence than the peones, who merely carried the ore and dirt from the mine. They were serious and dignified, and their manifest satisfaction at the appearance of the vein was correspondingly impressive. Don Alfredo took some samples of ore, and our curiosity was high to see what they would assay. Jumping upon our mules, we sent them racing down the trail, and knowing that a feed of corn awaited them, they carried us back to camp in less than half the time it took to reach the mines. We now started a fire in the assay-furnace, crushed the ore and prepared the assays, and eagerly watched the result of the fiery test. The beads came out as big as small peas. The ore was very rich, as the foreman was ready to wager, and it carried considerable gold. Ore like that, if it holds out, constitutes a bonanza. Doña Marciana came to exclaim and admire, but she also held, woman-like, to the opinion that a well-prepared dinner should not be despised, even if the mines were in bonanza. After dining, we sought our hammocks, for the afternoon siesta. The mountains and valley were suffused with a golden haze, which merged with our slumbers, and tinged our dreams with gold. But the next day brought disillusion. The rich find turned out to be only a pocket of ore, and was soon exhausted. The mother vein lay further in the moun-

tain, the foreman said. It meant running the tunnel a little further, that was all. Don Alfredo was sanguine, like the foreman. It takes a sanguine man to make a successful miner.

So fascinated did I become with this mining life, so absorbed in the contemplation of what each day brought forth,— the past, which had to do with cities and civilization, grew dim and unreal, while the present seemed the only reality. I even had ceased to think of my ride in the mountains and of "Wolf-Face," until one day our storekeeper, who spoke a quaintly broken English, reminded me of him.

"The people were all surprise, that night you arrive," he remarked; "they say you bring one very bad peon."

"Why bad?" I inquired.

"Quien sabe?" he said with a shrug; "they say he has kill some people."

"What did he kill them for?" I inquired, trying to appear indifferent.

"For to rob them," replied the storekeeper. "He is very bad man. He has — how you say it? — *corazon de lobo.*" [Heart of a wolf.]

This bit of information was on the whole rather gratifying; for while I had never communicated my suspicions regarding "Wolf-Face" to a soul, my opinion of him was at last vindicated.

CHAPTER III

Stories of Lost Mines: "El Naranjal": How Mines Were Lost: Fear and Strange Superstitions of the Indians: Story of the Man Who Says He Saw "El Naranjal": Story of "La Providencia": The Foolish Compadres: The Life Search of Don Modesto.

OF all the romantic tales heard in this land of romance, none are more fascinating than the stories of lost mines: of mines that were known, long before the War of Independence, to have been fabulously rich; but which have since disappeared, together with their Spanish owners, as completely as though they never existed.

It is said by some that when these mines were abandoned by the Spaniards, they were effectually covered up; and that in many instances the owners died without divulging their whereabouts. Others say that to this day there are Indians living in remote places in the mountains, whose fathers worked in these very mines and who could show them up if they would. There was an old superstition among the Indians, doubtless founded on the threats of their masters, that to betray the locality of an ancient mine would bring certain death; and in some instances this belief still exists. Mexico abounds in old mines that were worked centuries ago, and in ruined *haciendas,* whose beginnings the people themselves know nothing about. They are encountered in most unlooked for and almost inaccessible

places; and it is not improbable that many more exist, to be discovered in the future.

One of the most famous and long-sought-for old Spanish mines, in this middle-western part of Durango is "El Naranjal" (the Orangery) which was reputed to be a big gold producer. Long after the Revolution, when mining in this section was revived by foreign capital, reports were rife about this wonderful mine; and yet no one knew just where it was. Many had heard it described by their fathers or grandfathers, and all agreed on one point; that the hacienda was surrounded by a large orange orchard (*naranjal*) from which the mine took its name. While it is hard to believe that such a place, which must have employed many peones, could be actually lost, if we consider the years during which all industry was paralyzed by continued wars, together with the apathy of the Indians, and the nomad existence of the average mining peon, it is not impossible.

Many are the exploring parties, equipped by wealthy mine owners, that have gone in search of "El Naranjal": many the supposed clues, such as traces of gold in a mountain stream, or a piece of rich quartz on the trail, that have been followed for weeks, only to end in disappointment. "El Naranjal," to all intents and purposes, existed only in the imagination of the people, who still talked about it as confidently as though it were an established fact. Their stories always held a peculiar fascination for me. It was not so much the hidden treasure as the old hacienda itself that excited my imagination. I often pictured the ruined buildings and the deserted chapel, whose bell had been silent for a century, save for a muffled note perhaps that fell from it on stormy nights; with no sign of life save the bats

that flitted in and out at nightfall, and with the orange trees growing thicker and taller, shutting it more and more away from the world.

So one day when a man said to me, "I have seen 'El Naranjal,' I stared at him in amazement for fully a minute, before I could believe my senses. Then I passed him my pocket flask, offered him a cigarro and waited for him to continue. He was a character, such as you will find only in a mining camp: half-Mexicanized, through long residence in the country; always threatening to leave it, yet never leaving; always expecting to strike it rich and never striking it.

"Yes," he went on, "I have seen 'El Naranjal.' It happened this way. I had been prospecting all summer near an old pueblo north of Durango, and was returning to the city for the holidays. The first night out, I came to a lone Indian rancho about sundown, and asked if I could sleep there. The owner, an old white-haired fellow, lived alone and as the road was seldom traveled, he seemed rather glad to see me. I had with me a couple of flasks of Scotch whisky, and when we had made a supper on beans and tortillas, I got out one of the bottles and after a number of pulls, he became exceedingly friendly. The talk turned on old mines, and he finally told me that he knew where there was a very rich one, with a ruined hacienda.

"He said it was during a war, probably the French intervention, and that the government had sent soldiers into the mountains after recruits. He took what cattle he had and drove them over the mountains and down the other side. At the bottom of the cañon beyond, which he had reached by following an old trail, he came on an abandoned hacienda. The mine, which was close by, had been worked extensively; and he picked up a

piece of rock on the dump, with chunks of pure gold, as yellow as the oranges. I questioned him more closely. He said there were many orange trees and that they were very old; and then I felt satisfied he had seen the lost Naranjal. I asked him if he would take me there; but he replied evasively and became very reticent, so the subject dropped.

"The next morning I waited anxiously for him to refer to it again, but he said never a word; and my experience with Indians had taught me never to try forcing their hand. The old fellow had treated me well, and as I was about to leave, I gave him the flask, which still had a little whisky left. His eyes glistened with delight and he went and put it carefully inside an ancient chest made of rawhide, that stood in the corner. Returning he handed me, without speaking, a piece of rock. Instinctively I knew it was the one he had picked up on the ore-dump. I held it to the light and saw gold nuggets, as big as the end of my little finger.

"I looked at the old man and waited for him to speak. Instead he took my arm and led me into the corral. Pointing to the mountains, he asked if I saw a peak that looked like a big *piloncillo* (conical loaf of sugar). On my answering in the affirmative, he said the trail he had followed crossed at that point. He was silent for a while as though thinking deeply. At last he said that if I wanted to see the old mine he would go with me as far as the peak, and start me on the right trail. Beyond that point, he himself would not go. He said there were bears and tigers on the other side, and that I would need to go well armed and with provisions for a week or more.

"Impressed as I was by what he had told me, I was in no position to profit by it. I was alone, with no

chance of getting aid inside of five days and without sufficient money to secure an outfit in any event. I determined, however, to remember the peak and that some day I would return and look for the mine. I cautioned the old man not to mention it to any one else. He looked at me gravely and replied that he was a youth at the time he made the discovery, and that I was the first one he had ever told. Promising him I would return, I set out for Durango.

"When I arrived, I learned that the men I had been working for had lost faith in the prospect and did not need my services any longer. I tried in vain to interest several mining men in 'El Naranjal.' They all heard me through, but had invariably too many irons in the fire already, to start on such a wild-goose chase, as they termed it; and I was at last compelled to go to work from actual necessity. Years went by and while I never forgot the old Indian's story I could never quite see my way clear to follow it up. Yes, I am a drinking man, a heavy one at times, like nearly all the old stagers; and often the money went in a spree that might have helped me to 'El Naranjal' and a fortune. It got so finally, that when I told the story people only laughed. I regretted a hundred times that I had not gotten possession of the rock, by hook or crook. The old man seemed loth to part with it, and at the time I didn't stop to consider the importance of having it to show.

"It was ten years later, when at last I saw my chance. I had been prospecting for some rich Americans at a point that I believed to be within at most four days' ride of the Indian's rancho. I was working some twenty odd peones and had been left in full control. The prospect looked more and more dubious and I had no mind to continue. Neither had I a mind to throw up the

sponge. The story of the lost 'Naranjal' haunted me. I thought of it by day and at last one night, in a dream, I saw as plain as I see you, the old hacienda with the orange trees growing all about it. The next day I picked out four of my best men, took what money I had on hand and prepared to hit the trail. Of course I did wrong to go without consulting my employers, but I had 'El Naranjal' on the brain. Besides I felt sure of success. After we had fairly started, I began to feel anxious about my old Indian. Was he living after all these years? I wondered.

"The journey proved longer than I had figured on, but the night of the fifth day, just as I was wondering if I could have missed the trail, I saw the familiar rancho. I went to the door with a beating heart and was met by a middle-aged man, whom I saw at once was too young to be my former friend. He proved to be his brother, and said the aged Indian had been dead several years, though he could not tell how many. I spent the night at the rancho and in course of conversation touched on old mines, but he professed the densest ignorance regarding them. At last I asked him point blank if his brother had never told him of his discovery, adding that he had not only told me of it, but offered to direct me to the place. For a second he eyed me suspiciously. Then going to the old chest, which I remembered only too well he took from it a small, black flask and holding it up before me, asked if it was mine. For a moment I was puzzled. Then like a flash it came to me, that I had given the old Indian what little liquor it contained on leaving him. I answered that it had once been mine, but that I had given it to his brother. At that he became voluble for an Indian. He said his brother had always looked for my return and had talked

of me to the last, instructing him, in case I did come, to go with me to the peak of the mountain, and show me the old trail. I was wild to be off and finally persuaded him to start with us the next morning.

"It was near sunset the next day when we reached the cone-shaped peak, and the old man got off his mule and began scanning the slope on the other side. At length he gave a satisfied grunt and holding aside the tall grass, pointed to the faint semblance of a trail. I was to follow that trail two or three days, he said, and I should see the *hacienda*. He then put out his hand. Greatly surprised, I pressed him to pass the night with us; but he steadfastly refused, and with one backward glance, that had in it something of dread, in the direction of the abandoned trail, he bade me 'Godspeed' and disappeared in the darkness. I was too excited to sleep and finally got up and sat by the fire till daybreak. We started as soon as it was light and then began one of the hardest jobs I had ever undertaken. It is not always a simple matter to keep on a trail that is in constant use; and when it comes to one that has not been used for half a century or more it is next to impossible. Sometimes we lost it and were an hour beating about in the brush, before we found it again. We had to walk, as the animals were as much at sea as we were; and we frequently had to cut our way through dense growths of chaparral. Sunset found us on a bare ledge of rocks, where the trail disappeared, and there was nothing to do but camp there for the night.

"At daybreak we began hunting for the trail, and the men had declared repeatedly there was an end of it when I discovered it, doubling on itself and leading through the brush again. I sent two men ahead with

machetes to make a path, and we followed slowly, leading the animals. Night found us apparently no nearer our goal. We were still descending the mountain, and on every hand stretched the limitless chaparral. I have been in lonely places, but never one like that. The old man had talked of bears and tigers. There was absolutely not a sign of life, not even a bird save an occasional vulture, sailing overhead. The men looked downcast and after supper one of them came and asked me to turn back. He said his companions were all *triste* (sad) and 'afraid we were going to the death.' I asked him why they thought so and he replied because the vultures had followed us for two days. For answer I told him to make ready for an early start and assured him we should make it in one day more. Then I rolled myself in my blankets.

"When I woke it was not yet light, but before I had actually opened my eyes, I knew I was alone. I called out but there was no reply. The cowards, satisfied that I would not turn back, had deserted me in the night; and when daylight came, I found they had taken the best part of the provisions. I cursed them till I was tired out, and swore with every oath that I would never give up till I had seen the mine, and that if I failed, the vultures were welcome to my carcass. Then I started again, hewing my way with a machete, that had luckily been left behind. I kept on all day, not even stopping to eat and had about decided to give it up until the following morning, when I suddenly came to a part of the slope that seemed a wide ledge of red sandstone. It was devoid of vegetation and the trail was sharply defined, being worn deep in the sandy formation. I determined to push on, relying on my mule to keep on the trail.

"It was now so dark I could not see four feet ahead. My mule seemed nervous and several times stood stock-still. I got off repeatedly and groped about in the darkness, to make sure I was still on the trail. I had just gotten into the saddle and ridden perhaps five rods further, when she came to a sudden standstill, snorted and began to tremble. I urged her forward but she reared and tried to bolt up the mountain. I turned her about and forced her on a few steps, when she stopped again and showed every sign of extreme terror. Dismounting I took a step forward, retaining my hold on her neck and it was well I did, for I found myself stepping into space, and only saved myself by hanging on to the mule. I had used my last match and there was nothing to do but stay my hunger as best I could and wait for daylight. It was evident that I had reached some sort of a jumping-off place; how much of a one I should know in the morning.

"When I awoke the sun was high. I had slept from sheer exhaustion, but I was provoked at finding it broad daylight. It was fortunate for me that it was though, for as I sprang up and started forward, I saw that I was near the edge of a precipice; and the thought of my close shave made me feel hot and cold by turns. I crept nearer and saw that the trail ran to the very edge of the cliff, which had the appearance of a mountain that had been sliced off like a loaf of bread. Crawling to the edge, I looked over and saw a perpendicular descent of thousands of feet, which, instead of sloping outward at the base, receded; and at either side, as far as I could see, was the same precipitous wall. The bottom of the cañon was four thousand feet below. As I scanned it hurriedly, a shining line of silver caught my eye — a river of course — and there, close beside it,

The foolish compadre

was a clump of bright green foliage, with patches of white that could be nothing less than the walls of the hacienda. Yes there was 'El Naranjal,' I could have sworn it: yet no desert mirage was ever more inaccessible. On every hand towered those forbidding cliffs. My provisions were exhausted. My mule was ready to drop in her tracks. I knew that unless I turned back and made the rancho, I should starve to death; on looking up I saw the vultures still sailing overhead. I sat for hours, gazing at that patch of green, till I could almost see the outlines of the buildings. Once I thought I heard the chime of a bell. At last, aroused by the burning sun, I took one last look and started sadly up the mountain, dragging my mule after me. Even then I was not satisfied to go, but turned again and again, till I could no longer see the bottom of the cañon.

"Before night, my mule lay down and refused to stir. I took off the saddle and left her. After that I lost sight of the vultures. Weary as I was, the ascent was much quicker than going the other way and after three days of terrible suffering, I reached the rancho, only to find it deserted. I managed to get into the house where I found a little corn. That night I chewed corn and drank water. The next day I made tortillas and then set out for Durango. Falling in with some freighters, I gladly traveled with them, and part of the way had a mule to ride. When I reached the city, I wrote a full account of my experience to my employers. I had some doubt as to whether they would believe me, and while waiting for an answer, my old enemy got the best of me and I went on a spree. It ended in an attack of fever and when I came to my senses two letters were handed me. The first one requested me to come at once; the second said they had heard of my goings on and

that they washed their hands of me. I told my story again and again, but no one took any stock in it and so for the second time, I was obliged to give the thing up. I shall have one more try at it though: I am waiting for a man now who has promised me an outfit, and you may be sure there will be plenty of rope to get down over those cliffs with. I'm going to find 'El Naranjal' or die trying. Who knows! You may see me on Easy Street yet!"

This is the story of the man who says he has seen "El Naranjal." Will he yet reach it and "Easy Street"? Who knows? Meantime the ancient hacienda sleeps peacefully among the orange trees, and the golden nuggets, yellow as the shining fruit, lie hidden away in the dark chambers of the old mine.

Another lost mine, of intense interest to us, was right in the Huahuapan district. Its name was "La Providencia." It belonged to Don Modesto, the grandee of the pueblo, who himself discovered it, when a boy. By agreement with his heirs, if uncovered by our peones, it belonged to us and we should be — never mind — here is the story.

When Don Modesto found "La Providencia" he was not even looking for it. He was searching for stray burros and found a mine instead. Years afterwards, when he did look for it, he could n't find it; and he spent the rest of his life in the search. He died, a tremulous, white-haired old man; but he had never for an instant abandoned the hope of finding "La Providencia" again; and he willed the mine together with all his other belongings to his youngest son Juan, who wore white cotton clothes and sandals, did n't know his own name when he saw it written, and was called *tonto* (foolish) by the rest of the family.

Juan liked the little rancho with its cows and pigs well enough; but when it came to the mine, he never even gave it a second thought. His experience in mining consisted in carrying out rocks in a heavy sack, like any beast of burden; and he was glad enough to have it over with. His brothers and sisters, all except Tonia, who like himself was not over-bright, had married and left the old house years before. They envied Juan the rancho, and the cows and pigs, but not the mine. Nevertheless, Juan was and is the ostensible owner of "La Providencia," one of the richest mines of its size the country has ever known, which was found by his father Don Modesto, then a boy, and lost by his grandfather Don Domingo.

To begin at the beginning, when Don Modesto was a boy, he lived in this pueblo. In addition to his father's house, there were perhaps some twenty others; the people were all so poor, they lived on corn and beans, and sometimes there was not enough of those.

When corn and beans were plenty, the men would put a few sacks on their burros and take them off over the mountains, to trade for luxuries such as salt, sugar and chocolate. These trips were of rare occurrence and the pueblo was practically unknown, until one day all this was changed by Don Modesto. His father, Don Domingo, sent him in search of some stray burros and he spent the day climbing about among the rocks. As he was trotting along with *guarache* shod feet, he stubbed his toe on a rock and while pretty well hardened to stubbing, this time it hurt; in boyish wrath he picked up the rock and started to throw it over the cliff. But it was a pretty rock, all blue and green, with thin, white scales on it, that glistened like the cobwebs on the grass, when the sun touches them. And there were little

bright yellow specks, the color of the candlesticks in the church. He concluded to keep it and as he saw no signs of the burros he went home, expecting at least a scolding, and to be started on a further search before daybreak.

When Don Domingo saw the rock in the boy's hand, he forgot all about burros. Don Domingo had once worked in a mine and he knew good metal when he saw it. The white scales, that looked like cobwebs, were native silver; and the yellow specks tiny particles of gold.

Sure enough, the boy had to start before daybreak the next morning; but Don Domingo went with him and told him to go straight to the place where he had stubbed his toe. Luckily for him he remembered and led Don Domingo there just as the sun rose. There was plenty more rock like the first and that was the beginning of "La Providencia." Don Domingo named the mine. He was a good Catholic and Providence had seen fit, in the midst of his poverty, to send him untold riches. He was a generous man and everyone's friend. Nearly every other man in the village was his *compadre,* and those who were not compadres were relatives. He gave each one a *labor* in the new mine, which meant the privilege to take out all the metal he could. Many of the compadres started tunnels of their own, lower down the ledge, and the side of the mountain looked like a great beehive with the workers toiling in and out, sometimes laden with waste but oftener with rich metal. Rude earthen furnaces were constructed in the village and the men melted the ore and carried the big chunks of silver over the mountains to the cities, returning with food and clothing, and with their saddle bags filled with big silver dollars. Of course the metal brought more than the ordinary price of silver, as it carried gold: the

"He kept his peons at work in the mines"

compadres never knew just how much gold, nor did they care. A hundred and odd big, silver dollars were good enough, for a few hours' work at the mine and fourteen days' ride in the mountains. One did n't have to work very hard or very often at that rate; for where was the use in filling all the jars in the house with silver dollars?

The women began to wear silks and satins and huge gold earrings, and the men had silver buttons on their trousers. Aside from this and a decided affluence in way of corn, beans and cigarros, there was slight change in the life of the pueblo. The men worked a little at their labores, and ate and smoked and slept a great deal. As for the mine, that of course would last forever. The only one who made any extra effort to get the big, silver dollars, was Don Domingo. I suspect that Don Domingo had good blood in him. Everything he did goes to show it. He kept his peones at work in the mine even when there was plenty of corn and beans; and when every jar was filled with dollars, he had a great box made, of rawhide, with figures of animals and birds worked on the cover. The box was filled too, and the people will tell you to this day how any of Don Domingo's friends were at liberty to help themselves. The box still stands in the old house of Don Modesto, but there are no dollars in it now: only beans, and they often get so low you can see the bottom.

Don Domingo kept getting out more metal and bringing home more silver dollars. He sent Don Modesto away to school and gave him all the money he could spend. He built himself a bigger house with a paved court and a heavy door to close at night such as he had seen in the cities. He built a high wall about the church and another around the graveyard; and had a big, stone tomb made, which was destined to receive his own re-

mains. All this cost money and besides his relatives came from far and near to visit him: and while they all came very poor, they never went away without a goodly supply of dollars. So although the rawhide box was kept filled, Don Domingo never found it necessary to make another. Gradually the fame of the mine went abroad, and people came flocking into the pueblo, though not in the way that Northern people flock to a mining region. Perhaps drifting is a better word. All who were not compadres of Don Domingo's, were compadres of his compadres; and all got labores in "La Providencia."

Don Modesto, meantime, remained away at college, where he learned a little and squandered a great deal. Don Domingo kept his peones at work in the mine and tried to incite his compadres to follow his example; but they grew lazier and lazier day by day, and finally, striking a body of ore that was not quite so rich as formerly, began taking out the pillars that *were* rich, but that should have been left to support the roofs of their tunnels. When Don Domingo learned this, he was furious and threatened to drive them from their labores. They promised him not to take out another pillar, but the damage was already done.

There are two rainy seasons in Mexico; one during the summer months, when it pours for a brief space daily and is followed by sunshine and budding flowers and a brighter green on grass and tree. The other falls in the winter, anywhere from December to March or even April. In the mountains the clouds hang low for days, threatening, lowering and then suddenly, without warning, the storm breaks and sweeps everything before it. What was but now a tiny stream becomes a raging torrent. Waterfalls spring into existence where they have

never been before. Trees are torn up by the roots and huge boulders are swept along. These are the storms that change the courses of rivers in a night, hollow out still deeper the cañons and frequently alter the entire appearance of the country. Such a storm struck the pueblo one dark December morning. The men were all safe in their houses. They had been expecting it and had not gone to their labores for days. More water fell than they had ever seen before. The little river flooded its banks and threatened to carry away the pueblo. Few of the houses were waterproof. When one has plenty of corn and beans and money to buy more, what does it matter if the roof lacks a shingle or two?

The storm raged for two days and two nights and then ceased as suddenly as it had begun. The third morning dawned, soft and mild as a northern June, and Don Domingo, who was tired of staying in his house, even though it was a good one, ordered his mule saddled and set out for the mine, followed by his peones. A number of the compadres, who had eaten more than usual during their enforced stay indoors and discovered that their supply of dollars was getting lower, decided to return to their work as well. They accordingly sauntered leisurely up the mountain, with Don Domingo in the lead. He rather lorded it over the others, and always wore a big hat with lots of silver on it, *pantalones* with silver buttons, and shoes. I have heard Don Modesto describe him as he rode on his mule at the head of the procession, going back to take more wealth from "La Providencia."

As Don Domingo was in the lead, he was the first to see that something was wrong. He was a bit in advance of the others, and he thought the ground looked strange. Suddenly he came to the top of a little rise

and stopped his mule in dismay. Before him was an unfamiliar country. Trees were twisted and torn up bodily; there were great rocks that he did not know and at his feet tumbled a noisy mountain stream. For a moment he thought he was dreaming. He gazed wildly about him, and then turning his mule, went flying back towards the amazed compadres screaming, "It is lost! The mine is lost!" They stared at him in bewilderment and then at the strange scene before them. The only familiar landmarks were the distant mountains. All the rest was changed. The trail, the labores, every vestige of the mine had disappeared.

The first that Don Modesto knew of the catastrophe was when he was summoned home from school. He knew something was wrong the moment he entered the pueblo. All the men looked crestfallen except Don Domingo. He, as I have said, had good blood in him, and he was determined to find the mine. He had a superstitious feeling, that as Don Modesto had first discovered it, he could find it again; but although they went together, that day and many more, they could form no definite idea as to what had happened. The fact was a portion of the mountain had been washed away and the tunnels, lacking pillars which were taken out by the lazy compadres, had all caved and been covered up.

Meantime the compadres sat idly bemoaning their lot. They had few dollars left and no heart to look for the lost labores. Don Domingo besought them to aid in the search and a few of them did, at least while his dollars held out: but now there was no rich metal to bring in more, and before long, not only the big box but the jars were empty. Then the compadres fell off and went to planting corn and beans again and some went to other pueblos; only Don Domingo kept bravely digging

away on the mountain and Don Modesto helped him. There was still a little rancho that produced more corn than the family required; and year after year, every cent that it brought went into those holes in the mountain.

At last Don Domingo, now grown very old, took to his bed. He was always talking of going back to work and discussed it eagerly with Don Modesto, every night when the latter returned. His last words, before he died, were a parting injunction as to the direction of the tunnel. So they carried him to the tomb that he had built and paid for, in the days when the chest was full. To Don Modesto, he left his indomitable spirit, his rancho and—"La Providencia"; and Don Modesto went on with the search. Year after year he grew poorer and poorer, as the crops failed or were eaten by insects, and he was forced to sell a pig or another cow. He married and the children came thick and fast. The girls grew up and learned to help the mother, Felipa, carrying water and grinding corn. The boys, just as soon as they were strong enough to hold a drill or carry ore, were sent to work in the tunnel.

Don Modesto grew old and gray as his father had done before him; always quiet and dignified, respected by all the people, never forgetting that his father had been the first man of the pueblo, never doubting that eventually he should come into his own. One by one the sons wearied and deserted him, going to live in other parts; all except his favorite, Canuto, and Juan, the youngest, who was only fit to be peon. The daughters, too, married and went away, till only Tonia remained to help old Felipa. Those were dark days for Don Modesto. The mother and daughter went barefooted like the poorest women in the village. Don Modesto

still wore shoes, though no one knew how he managed it. Perhaps he realized that if he once stooped to sandals, the dignity of the family was gone forever.

By this time there were but two at work in the tunnel which had become a labyrinth, crossing and recrossing, up and down, and always waste, nothing but waste. Canuto and Juan worked together, first with the drill and then with the *suron*. Don Modesto rode the little old mule, that had been Don Domingo's, up the mountain every morning, flushed with hope; and back again at night sad, disappointed, but never actually discouraged. As for Felipa, she shared his conviction that the mine would yet be found.

When it came time to harvest the corn and beans, Juan was sent to the rancho; and Canuto, who could not work alone in the tunnel, posted off to some mining camp, and earned more money, to go on with the hunt for "La Providencia." It was this that brought the final *desgracia* and broke Don Modesto's heart and spirit at the same time. Canuto, though a good boy, was a bit wild and fond of mescal. He was also a stout friend. One day, his companion at a fiesta was arrested. Both had been drinking and he flew to his assistance. There was a fight and Canuto was shot to death.

Don Modesto never recovered from the blow. Neither did Felipa, but when the first shock was over, she settled again into the old routine and wanted Don Modesto to go back to his tunnel. He, poor man, seemed to have lost all heart. He would sit for hours with his head bowed between his hands, or pace nervously up and down the patio, without speaking to a soul. Felipa said several times in his hearing, that it worried her to have a man about the place all the time, but he did n't seem to notice. Juan also took to loafing around home, only

going to the rancho occasionally to look at the corn and beans.

Months passed and Don Modesto remained the same. When at last the change came, no one knew how to account for it. One morning he got up before it was light and put on working clothes and sandals just like a peon. Felipa was frightened but she, wily old thing, pretended to take it as a matter of course and flew about with Tonia making an extra batch of tortillas. Don Modesto called Juan, told him to get the drills and the rest of the mining tools and together they started up the mountain. Don Modesto was walking. To be sure he only carried one drill, while Juan was loaded like a pack animal; but the mere fact of his carrying anything and dressing like a peon set the whole town agog; and the people shook their heads and predicted no good would come of it.

When they returned, late that night, Don Modesto's eyes shone. With trembling hands he produced some pieces of rock and showed them to Felipa. They were not much to look at but her practised eye detected silver. Yes, he had struck a vein and it was rich metal. He was sure he had found it at last. Ah, that Canuto were alive now! and then old Felipa began to cry and wail "Adios — Adios!" just as she had when their boy was killed.

She soon stopped crying and began getting supper, and before the meal was over all were quite cheerful. The next day they went again to the tunnel, and the next; and then a burro was driven up and came back at night, loaded with ore. The pueblo was wild with excitement. Felipa was jubilant and as the other women had swarmed into the patio, she began ordering them about, setting this one to carrying water and this one

to grinding corn. Meantime she crouched in the court and smoked one cigarro after another. Her face was partly muffled in her black shawl, but her old eyes had an exultant gleam. Was not "La Providencia" found?

Don Modesto told Juan to start the fire in the furnace and he himself prepared to run the metal. All night they worked at the furnace. Tonia, who but half comprehended what had happened, lay down on her mat and slept; but Felipa crouched all night in the court, where she could see the flames, and smoked. A drizzling rain fell and Don Modesto was drenched to the skin but he hardly knew it. When morning came he had nearly fifty ounces of silver. He was shaking all over when he went to show it to Felipa, partly from excitement, but more from cold and exhaustion. Felipa was as excited as he was. She told him to lie down, while she went to get the breakfast. When she came back, she found him hot with fever, tossing and muttering about "La Providencia" and his dead boy Canuto. Felipa sent Juan to the mine for more metal and she and Tonia set about doctoring Don Modesto, who grew steadily worse. When Juan came home at night, she told him to saddle the little mule and go at once to call the other children; to tell them "La Providencia" was found and that Don Modesto was very ill.

They came fast enough, and inquired for their father and the mine in the same breath. Was he very ill — was the mine really found? Yes, he was very ill,— dying in fact, and perhaps it was just as well. The mine was not found at all. It was only a little *hilo* (thread) Don Modesto had run into, and there was no more of it. The compadres had worked the second burro-load in the furnace but it gave little or nothing.

The funeral procession

Prayers in the little church

Then they went to the tunnel and looked for themselves.

This point settled, there was nothing left to do but watch Don Modesto die. A hurried search was made for a will and not finding one, the brothers and sisters got a man who could write, to set down all his possessions on paper, in case he revived sufficiently to signify who was to have them. By this time it was dark and they gathered at the bedside. Candles were lighted and a woman began rapidly saying the prayers for the dying. Felipa crouched motionless at the foot of the bed, her head muffled in her black shawl. Tonia was in a corner, sobbing aloud, and Juan knelt by his father, his poor, simple face streaming with tears. Suddenly an old crone set up the death-wail. As her voice shrilled it was taken up by the others. The woman prayed louder and faster and the oldest son sprang on the bed and began winding Don Modesto's left hand and arm with long strips of coarse white cloth. He had finished the left arm and was well along with the right, when Don Modesto opened his eyes. He knew his hour had come. He heard the death-wail, saw the winding sheet, and still the brave old spirit asserted itself. He struggled to raise his head and Juan got on the bed back of him and lifted him up. Then some one brought the paper and held it close to his eyes. He scanned it closely and they knew from his look he understood; but when he came to the end he frowned and tried in vain to speak. Then Felipa bent over and whispered, "La Providencia?" He nodded and they remembered they had not even put the mine in the will. So the man who could write added "La Mina Providencia" and then they asked him how he wanted the things divided. This time they clearly heard him say "Juan." Was Juan to

have everything they asked in dismay and he nodded again. The others were furious but could do nothing; so the scribe wrote "to my son Juan" and held out the pen to Don Modesto, who looked fretfully at his right hand, which was partially wrapped in the grave clothes. They had to unwind them and the pen was placed in his nerveless fingers. For a moment it looked as though he could not sign; then slowly, feebly he began to make the elaborate scroll, that he always put under his name and that should have come last. They thought his strength would fail; but when the scroll was completed, with every dash and flourish that belonged to it, he traced his name above it in tremulous characters and fell back exhausted against Juan's knee. The oldest son began rapidly winding his right hand again, and this time Don Modesto did not open his eyes.

The fifty ounces of silver paid for a burial befitting Don Modesto's station; and Felipa bought yards and yards of black calico, with which the compadres festooned the front of the house. Don Modesto lay in state for three days. He looked very peaceful with his silvery hair and beard and a decent suit of black, which the women declared Felipa had kept hidden away ever since their wedding. On the fourth day, there were prayers in the little church, and he was borne up the mountain, for the last time, on the shoulders of his compadres. The women and children followed, wailing and tossing their arms wildly above their heads. A tomb had been built of stone, just like Don Domingo's, and there Don Modesto sleeps by his father's side.

Felipa mourned for a time and then, with Indian resignation, took up her old life; and Juan, who was glad enough to get through carrying ore, went back to his corn and beans. On rare occasions, such as his

dia Santo or some special fiesta, he puts on the trousers with the silver buttons, that were Don Modesto's, and the big hat. Juan cannot endure shoes, and bare, brown feet make rather a queer tapering off to so much splendor; but they don't show much as he lolls within the door, smoking his cigarro. Then the people, remembering the past greatness of the family, tip their hats lazily, salute him as "Don Juan" and tell again the story of the wonderful mine, that once made the pueblo rich; the long-lost "La Providencia."

CHAPTER IV

Leaving the Mines: A Last Ride: The Thoughts of a Mozo: A Meeting on the Train: A Man is Known by his Shoes: Pleasant Experiences in Zacatecas: Arrival at Mexico City: Kindness of Mexicans to Strangers: The Best Way to Learn Spanish: The Plaza Mayor: Cathedral Towers: Thoughts of the Conquest: The Paseo de la Reforma: A Meeting with Diaz.

OF all the prospects in the Huahuapan district, "La Providencia" was our favorite. All the traditions of the pueblo, concerning its former wealth, centered in that mine. The survivors of the family that had owned it, though now very poor, were treated with deference by the people; and they maintained an evident family pride. There seemed slight cause to doubt that the mine had existed, or that it had been very rich. To this the people all agreed without dissent. And for tangible evidence that its owner had made dogged and courageous efforts to find it, after it was lost, there were interminable tunnels, cross-cuts and shafts remaining. Into these Don Alfredo put his workmen and his money. He believed in "La Providencia" and was determined to find out what was inside that mountain; he said this knowledge was essential for his peace of mind, and he was willing to pay for it.

Nearly a year passed, and although several very rich pockets were found, *la veta* (the vein) eluded us. In some of the other prospects, "blankets" of rich ore came to light, but none were continuous. The country gave

evidence of gigantic upheavals, which might well have broken up the ledges, and this theory coincided with that of the older men in the pueblo. I had evolved an idea which I jealously guarded. I believed the valley too beautiful to offer material wealth as well. It continued for me a sort of paradise, and I tried in vain to banish the fear that in the end we should be forced, by circumstances, to leave it. We had visited other camps, where the mines were big producers; but when that was said, there was no more to say. There was plenty of everything in those camps, food, drink and money. But no happiness that I could see! And the surroundings were barren and desolate: every vestige of green was trampled by the pack-trains carrying out the silver. True, there was generous hospitality and the comradeship of men of our own race. But in the mines even friendship is marred by the feverish lust for gold.

Returning from these camps, with prosperity strong in our nostrils, Don Alfredo and I were at first inclined to be gloomy. The ride was usually a matter of a day, however, and it was impossible to be gloomy, for twelve consecutive hours, in those glorious mountains. When we gained the last summit and gazed on the valley of Huahuapan, we invariably began praising it for its beauty. Don Alfredo would then say with emphasis that all it needed, to make it the finest camp in the world, was a good mine. If by chance we had left "*La Providencia*" in metal, he would begin planning the survey for a pipe-line, and would point out a favorable site for a mill. With me, however, the guilty conviction grew that it would be impossible to build pipe-lines and tramways and erect a mill, without hopelessly disfiguring the valley.

When the blow came, it was a sudden one and that

was well. Don Alfredo returned alone one day, from an extended prospecting tour, and told us that he had "denounced" another mine. It was situated in the hot country, on the other side of the mountains, and was two days' ride from the valley. We decided that to break up camp and go at once was the only way. We were fond of the people and they of us. We had nursed their sick and tended their wounded. And the people had long since accepted us. Their thoughtful kindnesses to us were unvarying, and between us there had grown a bond of mutual trust. We were sad indeed when we bade them good-by and took leave of the valley of Huahuapan. That the people were truly sorry too, I know. Yet we felt the parting more. They had their "matter-of-course" psychology to console them.

For two days we journeyed coastward, over those gigantic ranges, down the western slopes toward the Pacific. The new mine was in the State of Sinaloa at an altitude of not over fifteen hundred feet. Once arrived there, Don Alfredo imperturbably went about surveying, while Doña Marciana, likewise unperturbed, again assumed her natural office of homemaker. I felt the irresistible desire to travel; to become acquainted with Mexico and the Mexican people. The year I had spent in the valley with my friends had been a happy one. It was comparable amost to rebirth, amid flawless, natural environment and with the constant uplift and inspiration of the mountains. The region we were now in was commonplace, by comparison, and while the future of the new mine seemed assured, before me stretched an unattractive vista of dull monotonous years. The present was insistently calling. I knew that beyond the mountains was the real Mexico with its opulent cities, its splendid architecture, and its wealth of romance and

beauty. These were the things which more than gold had called me to Mexico. My friends reasoned in vain, Don Alfredo particularly dwelling on the fine promise of the new mine. The low, hot country palled upon me. I was resolved to have a last, long ride through the mountains, and then take train for Mexico City.

The month was May, the rains being close at hand. I began preparations for my journey, and at the thought of all the strange and delightful experiences before me, my animation returned. I had engaged an excellent and favorite mozo, but at the last he fell ill with fever, and I was forced to take a mozo named Antonio, whom I had never liked. He was a superior type, quite white, and of good repute as a guide; but he had impressed me as sullen and discontented, and I always set store by a cheerful mozo. At last my luggage and grub-box were ready. Doña Marciana and her Indian maid had been engaged for days in preparing various comestibles; and while there was an abundance of tortillas, there were also several loaves of American bread.

Don Alfredo, true to California tradition, placed his purse at my disposal and endeavored to force upon me sundry substantial sums, which I gratefully rejected. I had ample funds for at least a year, and I was confident I could earn more before they were exhausted. For the rest, money borrowed is money to be repaid; and I have found it easier to avoid all such dealing.

It was hard to leave those kind and true friends, but I promised that after I had traveled through Mexico I would return, and the thought of a not distant reunion made us more cheerful. Antonio being ready for the start, with the two pack-mules headed up the trail, I climbed into the saddle and with a parting "Adios!" I

turned my face once more towards the mountains. Soon all sights and sounds of mining industry were left behind. Again I was amid the silent, fragrant pines. As we ascended my spirits rose and the charm of life returned. I felt as though casting off a sort of malignant miasma; and foolish though it may seem, I invariably experience this sensation when departing from the mines into the mountains.

While I had known excellent mozos, Antonio surpassed them all for service. He was faultless. He was lithe, active, very quick on his feet, and careful with the mules. When we halted for the night, he had the saddles and freight off the animals in a flash, piled for me a couch of pine boughs, and deftly prepared and served the supper. As I have said, he was quite white and seemingly intelligent. But he was extremely taciturn. The first night, after he had brought my supper, I bade him eat. With expressionless face he declined, saying he would eat when I had finished. There was a finality in his tone which did not brook further condescension. And while condescension was far from my intent, it seemed that for him it could have no other meaning. When I turned in, Antonio carefully spread my blankets and tucked them under; he would then crouch before the fire and smoke, looking fixedly at the flames. What were his thoughts? I observed his well-formed hands and feet, his shapely head, and thought he probably came of good stock. I wondered whether he held the same opinion, and chafed at being only a mozo. In no other way could I account for his sullen manner and manifest discontent. He never neglected his duties, but would spring up from sound sleep and run swiftly through the chaparral to keep the mules from straying too far from camp. Still I did not like him.

The weather was fine and we had covered ground each day, Antonio knowing all the short cuts to save distance. He said we should make Durango on the fourth day. For my part, I was in no hurry, for this was to be my last ride in the mountains. I was enjoying every hour and was even becoming reconciled to my mozo. The third night we passed in the uplands. The cold was intense and I woke with a start, about midnight. Antonio was sitting by the fire with his brooding gaze upon me. His eyes met mine, cold and inscrutable. It seemed his thought was scarcely friendly. I inquired for the mules, and asked him if he was cold. He said the mules were all right but was noncommittal as to the cold. When I suggested coffee he quickly brewed some and to my surprise, he drank a cup while I was drinking mine.

We made Durango City on the afternoon of the fourth day. Since the previous night I had felt more friendly toward Antonio; and I was grieved at his asking me to loan him a hundred dollars. His face lowered and his eyes gleamed when I declined. I suppose he thought I was rich. I gave him a handsome gratuity, in addition to his regular fee; but he took leave of me with a scowl. A month after that he shot a man from his own pueblo for a price. The man was a desperado, and the *jefe politico* had offered a hundred dollars for his removal. So Antonio got the sum he was in need of after all.

Travel in the mountains being now at an end, I decided to sell my mule. True to herself, she had preserved her antipathy toward me to the last. If she was not glad to find another master, she at least was not sorry to leave her former one. I also parted with my saddle and rifle. I had still some clothes in my trunks that were good enough for city wear, but my stock of Ameri-

can shoes was exhausted. Before leaving the mines, I had the forethought to write home for a pair to be sent by parcel-post, and to my satisfaction I found them awaiting me in the post-office at Durango.

The following day I took train for Torreon, from whence I should proceed to Mexico City. As I found my seat in the Pullman, a lady and gentleman, apparently Americans, entered the opposite section. I judged that they were man and wife, that they were just turned thirty and that they were from New England. I longed for society, yet felt a sort of shyness that must have been due to my year in the mountains. I found a book and began to read, but so attractive were my neighbors, I found reading out of the question. Soon the gentleman asked to see my railroad folder and in this way the ice was broken. Their manners were as charming as their appearance, and our acquaintance ripened quickly. "Are you from the United States?" they asked, almost simultaneously. And at my replying that I was, they exchanged glances.

"But how did you guess I was an American?" I asked.

"By your shoes!" they announced with triumph, "and it was so good to see a brand new pair of American shoes in Mexico."

My new friends, whom I will call the Howards, intended to stop over a day at Zacatecas, and I asked leave to join them. We arrived in the early evening and found lodging in "El Zacatecano," an old convent restored as a hotel and with much architectual merit, especially in the patio. After the *cena* or supper, which in Mexico is a substantial repast with always at least one meat course, we went to the plaza to hear the band, which was under the leadership of that splendid maestro,

West side of Plaza Mayor, Mexico City

Fernando Villalpando. How can any one be sad in Mexico on a summer's night, with a Mexican band playing the alluring airs of the country?

Mrs. Howard, who was a finished musician, was enchanted and insisted on expressing our thanks for the pleasure the concert had given. We found Sr. Villalpando a charming and courteous man and after we had bidden him good night, he had the band play "La Golondrina," out of compliment to the fair stranger who had expressed admiration for it. It was then I heard that lovely and plaintive air for the first time, and my fondness for it has only increased with the years. The verse is of Spanish origin and describes the sorrows of the Moorish ruler, Aben Hamet, on leaving his home in Granada, when Ferdinand and Isabel expelled the Moors from Spain. The first verse is as follows: —

"Aben Hamet, al partir de Granada,
Su corazón desgarrado sintió:
Allá en la Vega, al perderla de la vista,
Con débil voz su lamento epresó: —
'Mansión de amores! Celestial paraíso!
Nací en tu seno do' mil dichas gozé; —
Voy á partir á lejanas regiónes,
De donde nunca jamás volvere.'"

"Aben Hamet in parting from Granada,
Felt his heart torn:
There on the *Vega,* when it was lost to sight,
With faint voice he made lament: —
'Mansion of loves! Celestial Paradise!
I was born on thy bosom where I knew a thousand joys;
Now I depart to distant regions,
From whence I shall never — never return.'"

I have heard that in the dwellings of the Spanish Moors in Africa there still hang the massive keys to

their lost homes in Granada; and that for generations they cherished the hope to return. Such is man's love of home.

The next day we visited the training school for boys, at Sr. Villalpando's invitation, and heard the boys' band, made up of youngsters all the way from ten years upward. They showed the effect of training by a master hand and played astonishingly well, rendering both Mexican and American airs: among them I remember "Hail Columbia" and "La Paloma."

Directly after dinner we set out to visit the Church of Guadalupe, which is very famous, both architecturally and for its paintings. This church, which is in the environs of Zacatecas, is reached by street car. On the car I made an inquiry of a young man who sat next to me and he replied in excellent English. He proved an interesting talker and we chatted together during the rest of the journey. As we were leaving the car, Mr. Howard whispered, "Ask him to go with us," and I lost no time in issuing the invitation, which my new acquaintance gracefully accepted, as though receiving an attention instead of granting one. We discovered later that he had put himself out not a little, for he was an attorney and had gone there on business; but with him, as with the majority of the Mexicans, courtesy to strangers was of first importance.

It is an easy matter to see Mexico's churches, if one is satisfied with merely entering the church and perhaps penetrating as far as the sacristy. To go further, an introduction is indispensable. Our new acquaintance, whose name was Sr. Ramirez, readily secured permission for us to go wherever we liked; and with him we visited the ancient convent, and ascended mysterious stairways leading into dark and silent corridors, whose

walls were hung with ancient paintings, dim with dust and age. Meantime Sr. Ramirez, who was thoroughly familiar with the history of the church, related many interesting and thrilling events that had transpired there.

On our way back to the hotel, I told Sr. Ramirez that Mrs. Howard sang charmingly. At that he had a brilliant idea: he declared that he should organize a musical without delay and that it should take place that very night. In the evening he appeared and announced that all was arranged. He escorted us to the rooms of the club, of which he was a member, where a party of his friends were already assembled to receive us. Then followed one of the most delightful evenings of my experience. There was that slight strangeness on both sides, that lent a piquancy to the most trivial event; and there was, at the same time, that sympathy that immediately obtains amongst music lovers, despite the fact that they may have met for the first and the last time. I remember that we had the serenade of Braga, with violin obligato. One of the young men played Beethoven superbly and the violinist had magic in his finger tips. There were Mexican *danzas,* and English songs rendered by Mrs. Howard: of the latter, I think "Annie Laurie" made the greatest impression. It seems to have been written not for the Saxon race alone, but for all men alike; appealing with the sweet melody, even when the verse is not understood.

We were amazed to find it was midnight and still we lingered for one more song. When we reached our hotel we found a parcel awaiting us. It was a present from Sr. Villalpando: a copy for each of us of his magnificent "Marcha Fúnebre," which was rendered at the funeral of Victor Hugo.

As I recall that night the face of the violinist comes back most vividly. It is strange what slight things make a lasting impression. On the night of the musical, wine was served and as we were taking it, I noticed this youth hovering near the chair of the American señora. He was a handsome fellow, quite fair, with a bright, boyish face and graceful bearing. Several others surrounded her, engaging her in conversation; this boy seemed worshiping from a distance. Suddenly he darted forward and the next instant he was bending before her to take the wine glass. It was that he had been waiting for. There was a charming savor of old-time gallantry in the act. While other courtiers had vied for the lady's favor, this knight stood by, waiting to serve her. That boy was subsequently killed by a rival in love. I have received an account of the tragedy, but what is the use of repeating it? The bright young life is gone out and no bitter words of mine can bring it back. I shall remember him as he played the "Angel's Serenade," with his cheek bent lovingly to the violin; and later, as he stood waiting to take the wine glass of the American señora.

Throughout our stay Sr. Ramirez was unfailing in his attention. With him, we saw the churches and the schools and under his guidance we made our pilgrimage to the little chapel on the heights, *el Santuario de la Bufa,* where many of the devout go to pray daily, and where all Zacatecas repairs, once a year, during the feast attending the anniversary of its consecration.

The following morning, he presented me with a paper on which were neatly written a number of important *datos,* regarding the history of the city. This was entirely his own idea and I felt duly grateful. He had

Zacatecas cathedral

Church of Guadalupe, Zacatecas

written it in Spanish and I give the translation as nearly as possible.

"The Indian town of Zacatecas was discovered, so says Padre Frejes, in the year 1531, by Pedro Almendes Chirinos. It was conquered the 8th of September, 1546, by Juan de Tolosa. On the 11th of June, 1548, they discovered the vein of "San Bernabe" which was the first silver mine.

"On the 20th of July, 1588, Zacatecas was elevated to the category of *Noble y Leal Ciudad,* by act of Felipe II.

"The Convent of San Agustin, now the Hotel Zacatecano and Presbyterian Temple, was erected in 1576 by the R. P. Alonso Quezada and rebuilt in 1613 by D. Agustin Zavala.

"Of the chapel of Mexicalpa (one of the first chapels), the date of construction is not known, but it is very old.

"El Santuario de la Bufa (the little chapel on the heights) was founded in 1548, but it was afterwards destroyed. The present chapel was erected over the ruins by the Sr. D. José Rivera Bernardez, Conde de Santiago de la Laguna and Colonel of Infantry. The count was also a famous writer and philanthropist.

"The temple was consecrated by the Ilmo, Sr. D. Nicolas Carlos Gomez Cervantes, Bishop of Guadalajara, on the 29th day of June, 1728."

The bones of the noble Conde de la Laguna repose in the crypt of the church of Santo Domingo. This splendid edifice, which fronts on the same square with the post office, was begun in 1746 and completed in 1769, which seems remarkable, especially as the cathedral has never been completed. The exterior of Santo Domingo is very fine. The interior was being restored, at a cost of about eight thousand dollars, but it is seldom that the

restoring process is an improvement to Mexico's churches. The paintings are nearly all by Francisco Martinez Sanchez; and one in the sacristy is dated 1749. In the church there is also a Cabrera which is very well preserved. Santo Domingo was originally the seat of the Inquisition, and the painter Sanchez was also its notary.

We were returning from the sacristy to the church, when I saw two of the attendants lifting a heavy door in the floor, and without a word we were ushered down a long flight of steps. The chamber at the bottom was scarcely visible in the dim light but the sacristan brought a candle, and we found we were in a crypt, surrounded by tombs, some ten or a dozen in all. On the door of one was the following inscription: "Here repose the remains of the Respectable Padre Fray Gregorio Moya, who died in the year 1680, and whose body was encountered without corruption, 111 years after death." Within this tomb, which was of wood, were two mummies in robes which seemed to have ossified as well. The quaint shoes, with large buckles, were still intact. In climbing up to examine them, I inadvertently clapped my hat on the back of my head, whereupon Sr. Ramirez kindly removed it without a word. In a long, coffin-like box we saw the remains of the count, which have lain there over two centuries. He must have been over six feet in his stockings. The sacristan said that until a few years ago, the count's red mantle was tolerably well preserved. Lime has recently been put in the coffin and now no sign of the mantle remains.

The most remarkable mummy was in a closed cell, with a small aperture at the top. Peering through this I saw the form of a priest, standing erect in one corner, with his hands crossed on his breast. The head and

face were but slightly disfigured and the body seemed to have retained its proportions. The robes, which were gray with dust, fell in statuesque folds and the whole had the look of a carving in stone. At his feet crouched a small dog, as though cut out of the same stone. I wondered if that dog followed the body of his master and was walled in by mistake!

Zacatecas was building an immense state hospital, of brick and stone, severely plain, with an inside court and a fountain. I asked whence the water would come. The reply was "Quien sabe?" This lack of water is a serious thing: almost as sad as a lack of bread.

The city's elevation is 8,000 feet. Its people numbered then 30,000. In 1892 the official count showed 42,000 and in 1887, 75,000. Sr. Ramirez said it was unlikely there would be a further drop, as already laborers were scarce. Some of the mines were still in good metal. The Zacatecas miners are known throughout the republic as good workmen, and I have met them in the mountains of northern Durango trotting along the trail leading to some big camp, in search of employment.

In the afternoon, being left to my own resources, I started just before sunset for La Bufa; and trudged slowly up the steep mountain, past the Indian huts and the little hump-backed boy, tending his goats among the rocks, reaching the chapel just as the sun disappeared behind the mountains opposite. The sky of Zacatecas was more deeply, intensely blue than any I had seen elsewhere, and retained its vivid quality at night, changing from azure to a deep and then a deeper sapphire. I watched the blue grow darker till it swallowed up the primrose line of the horizon, and then saw in the west a crescent moon and one brilliant star. Soon all the stars came out and the trail, which a mo-

ment before had looked dark was light enough for the descent. On my way down I met the lone figure of a woman, shrouded in a black shawl, toiling up the rocky path to the chapel, which shone white and bold in the starlight.

> What gleams so bright from the mountain height,
> Amid the stars of the sober night?
> 'Tis the light on the holy chapel wall,
> Inviting the pilgrim to pray in its hall.

We left Zacatecas the following morning. Sr. Ramirez, attentive to the last, came to see us off. He was one of the first of many kind acquaintances we made in traveling and his was the customary courtesy of Mexico.

My American friends, whose immediate destination was Guanajuato, had to change trains at Silao; and while I felt inclined to continue in their company, the desire to see Mexico City, *la Capital* as she is called, was overmastering. She is to Mexico as New York to America, Paris to France, Madrid to Spain. She had drawn me to her with irresistible charm ever since I could remember. I had Prescott's "Conquest" and Wallace's "The Fair God" in my trunks, and meant to read them again within her very gates. So now that only an afternoon and night intervened, I determined to continue on the train. After a farewell luncheon with my friends at the Silao station, with a dish of luscious strawberries, they took the branch road for Guanajuato and I continued on to Mexico.

I awoke at seven o'clock the next morning, just as our train entered the station. Picking a couple of stout cargadores or porters, I gave them my trunk checks and at the same time recorded the numbers displayed on

their metal badges. I then took a coach and told the coachman to drive me to Calle San Agustin. I had with me two letters of introduction; one from a young Mexican in the mines to a friend who was studying engineering in Mexico City; and another from an American in the mines to an American who was practising his profession in Mexico City. The letter to the young Mexican was directed to his boarding-place, and I presented it at once, as I desired to secure lodging there. From the moment that this young man, Don Juan he was called by all his friends, read the letter and offered me his hand, placing himself unconditionally at my service, he became a sincere, useful and devoted friend. The apparent reason for this was that a mutual friend had recommended me. He was the son of a well-to-do family residing in one of the smaller cities, and was in Mexico City completing his education. He at once presented me to the lady of the house, with whom I arranged to take a large comfortable room, opening on the flower-filled patio, and my meals, for the moderate sum of $40.00 per month Mexican money.

My Spanish, after a year in the mountains, was execrable. Finding slight inclination or time to study, I had learned it from the mountain people. Don Juan, who had a gentle manner and a most cheery smile, at once volunteered to take my Spanish in hand and to converse with me whenever we both were at leisure. I accepted with the condition that I should teach him English; and while he acquiesced with apparent delight, I discovered that this was merely courtesy. His part of the contract he kept, but I was unable to fulfill mine as he cheerfully insisted on speaking Spanish whenever we were together. There were about forty men living at this house, all young, and either at college or just be-

ginning to practise their profession or calling. Only Spanish was spoken, and each one good-naturedly joined in my instruction. For six months I blundered without compunction. For six more I suffered real mortification, for I had learned enough to realize how atrociously I violated the language. At the end of a year my friends said I spoke quite well. I read Spanish with ease at least and understood all that I heard. I went often to the theater, and the greater number of my acquaintances and friends were Mexicans; so that I heard it constantly spoken. One morning, on waking, I was conscious of a dream, in which my thought or meditation had been in Spanish. I was overjoyed at this, and while I knew I had begun too late to ever speak it with perfection, I knew too that in a sense I at last possessed it. It would be idle to speculate as to the effect of language upon life, but Spanish, I believe, has enriched life for me at least one hundred per cent.

It was Don Juan who first guided me about the streets of the magical city, Mexico, the pride of the Spaniards, built over the ruins of Tenochtitlan, pride of the Aztecs. My kind young friend, in whose veins coursed the blood of both these noble races, strolled beside me, murmuring in his soft, pleasant voice the facts that I ought to know: — population about five hundred thousand; altitude a little over seven thousand feet; many foreigners in the capital, mostly in trade,— Spaniards in provisions and wines, French in dry goods, Germans in drugs and hardware, Americans in mining and everything else. The city was healthful, though one must be careful at night not to sleep with open windows. The volcanoes, Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, were not visible in the afternoon, at this season, but the next morning he would call me to see them. They were ten thousand feet

Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City

higher than the city, with a total height of about seventeen thousand feet.

I heard the foregoing as through a pleasant dream. At last, after a life of anticipation, I was in Mexico. Everything charmed me; the houses, with their transient glimpses of interior gardens and fountains; the pleasant monotony of the sky-line, broken at intervals by superb towers and domes; and the Alameda with its fine trees and military band; the people in carriages and the people on foot; the composite life of the street; the color, the animation, the happiness. We walked through San Francisco and Plateros to the great plaza, where stand the Cathedral and both the National and the Municipal Palace. Don Juan said we must ascend one of the Cathedral towers for a view of the city; so we climbed the massive, stone stairs, being halted midway by a gate, where the porter had his habitation with his wife and children, and taxed each visitor six cents for the view from the tower. When at last we had reached it we found the volcanoes had emerged from their clouds and stood forth in dazzling white splendor, against the blue. I observed that there were broad balustrades providing comfortable seats and nooks in the masonry where one might sit all day and read.

The next morning I again sought the tower, with Prescott's "Conquest" for my companion; and with frequent glances at the city and the wide valley, spread on every side to the foot of the mountains, I read again, on that day and many more days, the story that is doubtless one of the most amazing and fascinating in the history of the world. The scenes of the main episodes of the conquest were before me. To the south stretched the causeway over which in 1519 Cortés and his men first entered the Aztec capital. In that square, where

the Cathedral and palaces now stand, he lodged his soldiers, and there he held Montezuma as hostage. To the west, over what is now Calle de Tacuba, he led his desperate forces in retreat, on "the Sad Night"; and his favorite, Alvarado, called by the Indians, "Child of the Sun," made his famous leap over the heads of his companions, who with their horses were floundering to their death in the ooze of the Canal. On that site of Mexico's great Cathedral there towered the Aztec Temple dedicated to the Heathen Gods. From their encampment without the city, the Spaniards saw their captive-comrades ascending the steps of the temple, to die on the sacrificial stone as an offering to the war god, Huitzilopochtli. And there they returned, in their day of triumph, to hurl down the god from his throne and level the temple walls in the dust. In the National Museum, not a square distant, both war god and sacrificial stone afforded weighty proof of the truth of it all.

I did not live wholly in the past, for there was the city life, vivid, real, exciting,— insisting that I should share it. In the afternoons I forgot the past and enjoyed the life of Modern Mexico. The most attractive point in Mexico's capital between the hours of 4 and 7 P. M. especially on Sunday and Thursday, is the *Paseo de la Reforma,* where one hears a superb military band and sees not only the beauty and fashion of Mexico, but a sprinkling of all sorts and conditions that help form its population. While the Paseo is comparatively a short drive, its magnificent trees, fine roads, and charming vista terminating in the castle-crowned heights of Chapultepec, together with the anticipation of the beautiful grove beyond, all serve to make it delightful. At the approach there is a gigantic equestrian statue of Carlos IV of Spain, which is called

familiarly by the people, *Caballito* (Little Horse). It is recorded on the base that it weighs 22½ tons,—was cast in one pouring by Manuel Tolsa, director of sculpture at the Academy, in 1802, and that the chiseling and burnishing occupied fourteen months. It was placed on its present site in 1852, having formerly stood in the Plaza Mayor. The entrance to the drive is also guarded by two enormous bronze figures of Indian warriors.

A far more interesting monument stands in the third *glorieta*. It bears the inscription, "To the Memory of Cuauhtemoc and of the warriors who fought so heroically in defense of their country in 1521." On the base are two fine bas-reliefs. One represents the capture of Cuauhtemoc at the moment when he was brought to the presence of Cortés, to whom he made his memorable speech of surrender: "Malinche, I have done what I could in defense of this city and of my nation," and placing his hand on the conqueror's dagger, "Take this now and kill me!" The other depicts his subsequent torture, which failed to elicit so much as a groan, still less the desired information about the treasure. Above are blazoned the names of Indian nobles and patriots, and the whole is surmounted by the bronze figure of an Indian of heroic size with spear uplifted as though to hurl it at the foe. The monument is flanked on either side by the broad driveway and an imposing semi-circular bench of stone. From this vantage-point one may listen to the music and watch the passing show.

At the first notes of the band there are few turnouts visible, but their numbers rapidly increase until the road is soon thronged with carriages, automobiles, equestrians and foot passengers. There rides a lady gowned in pale lavender, the latest Paris creation, no doubt; her faultless victoria drawn by a pair of high-stepping bays

docked *á la Inglésa,* and with two men in livery up in front. She is followed by a pair of beautiful black horses with flowing manes and tails, their fine heads and sensitive nostrils suggesting an Arab strain. They draw a brougham faultless as the victoria, but the owner has chosen to retain one feature essentially of the country. The coachman, a dark swarthy fellow, wears a tight-fitting suit of black and a huge sombrero, thus adding a picturesque quality. There rides a young *caballero* in all the bravery of Mexican attire, both his suit and hat elaborately trimmed with silver. His horse, a mettlesome gray, seems to step the prouder for the silver-mounted trappings. At his side a youth of as many years has adopted the English mode and rides a stylish trotter, rising in the stirrups in approved form. Now a ranchero reins his pacing mule to listen to the music. Behind him is a tiny mite of a boy, his chubby legs tied in the thongs of the Mexican saddle — his hands clutching his father's jacket, while he looks amazement from a pair of big black eyes. The crowd increases. There a peon in brilliant zarape is buying *dulces* for his wife and child who sit on the curbstone and blissfully devour the sweets. Here a woman walks, graceful, barefooted, carrying an immense earthen jar on her head, and passing amid all this gay throng, come some freighters with their band of sleek-coated mules.

During this scene of tropical color, beauty and luxury, at a stone's throw have been passing innumerable little street cars, some of them draped in black, others in white, surmounted by crosses, and bearing suggestive coffin-shaped boxes. These have gradually ceased, however. New equipages laden with beautiful women dash past. One catches a fleeting glimpse of dark eyes and of jeweled fingers twirled rapidly at some passing friend.

Mexico, May 20, 1898

Porfirio Diaz

A young Southerner romantically inclined says they make him think of twinkling stars which are now beginning to show over the tree tops. The sun has dropped behind the mountain, there is a young moon overhead,— the strains of La Golondrina float across the Paseo,— the scene is one not to be forgotten. It is *la noche* and evening life has begun in the gayest city of the Republic.

The Howards arrived in Mexico a few days later than I, with enthusiastic accounts of the picturesque charm of Guanajuato. I soon learned that Mr. Howard's paramount desire was to meet the President of Mexico, and as he carried credentials from the highest sources, both official and social, his pretensions seemed not unreasonable. For the rest, he pursued his goal with the unwavering assurance peculiar to men of his race. He had brought letters to Senator de Herrera of Chihuahua, and it was no surprise when he informed me that the Senator would present us to President Diaz at the National Palace the following day.

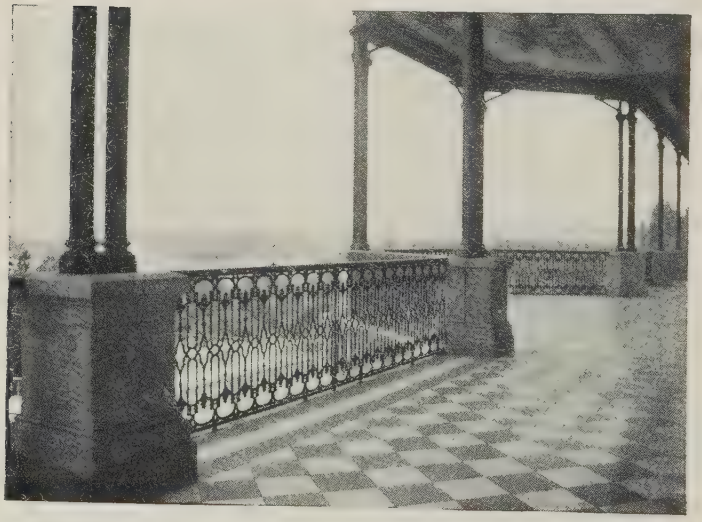
On our entering the presidential apartment, the anteroom was deserted as was also the receiving room into which the Senator conducted us. The next moment, President Diaz entered. His presence was extremely commanding,— not haughty but dominant. His countenance was handsome and rather impassive, his complexion fresh and sanguine, his eye large, dark and at that moment mild. His hand-shake was firm and cordial and his hand warm and dry, denoting perfect circulation. Mr. Howard at once delivered to the President a message from his father, an elderly gentleman, who had always followed the career of the President with admiration, and who now begged that he would send him, by the hand of his son, a signed photograph. Thereupon the President signed and gave us two photographs. But Mr.

Howard, who possessed a naïve and charming manner, asked to be permitted to photograph the President with his own camera. The President seemed agreeably impressed by the sincerity of his request, and we were accordingly bidden to visit him the following Sunday morning at Chapultepec Castle.

On Sunday morning at ten o'clock we went to Chapultepec. The President received us with distinct kindness, dismissed his attendant, and led us upon the terrace. The month was May. The light was golden, the sky blue, with no premonition of the afternoon shower. On the west and south rose giant cypress trees, the pleasure-groves of Aztec emperors before the coming of the Spaniards. On the east, was the broad Paseo de la Reforma, fringed with tall eucalyptus trees, leading straight to the city, whose towers we could plainly see. We could even hear the Cathedral bells. From this same terrace the Empress Carlota watched, on summer evenings, for the coming of Maximilian, who had endeavored to reproduce here all the beauty of Miramar. The frescoes and furnishings were still eloquent of the luxurious tastes of the Austrian Arch-Duke and his beautiful consort, whose hand was especially revealed in the charming interior gardens.

The Senator, glowing with pride, had just entreated us to admire once more the beauties of Popocatepetl and Ixtaccihuatl, limned in snowy profile against the blue, and under the spell of their enchantment we followed the President to the north terrace where historical fact awaited us. While history by no means precludes enchantment, it is not its distinguishing feature; but we had been reading Prescott, and the romance of the Conquest possessed us. We were surrounded by reminders of the brief reign of Maximilian, and these though sad are in

Castle of Chapultepec



Corridor of Chapultepec

the main beautiful. Is it easy to be unmindful of our own trespasses? I confess I scarcely remembered the war of '47. Then came the grim fact,— on that field the Mexican and American armies met: at that precise angle of the cliffs, our soldiers scrambled, tooth and nail, to assault and capture the castle. I learned now, for the first time, that it was defended by boys who were cadets in the military school,— some only fourteen years old.

The President, when he had indicated the exact point of attack, started to move on. Our kind friend, the Senator, began speaking rapidly, half in extenuation,— I remember he placed much stress on the fact that it all happened a good many years ago. He could not but speak thrillingly of those boy-heroes,— his son was even then a cadet in Chapultepec Academy,— but he also paid a tribute to the bravery of the Americans. The Mexican boys were young lions, the Senator said,— they died like men. The young color-bearer, fatally wounded, clutched the flag in his arms and hurled himself over the embankment, rather than surrender. And an American officer, when he saw the wounded and dying boys, shed tears and said they were too young,— that they should not have been there to die so young. Then the Senator spoke of the monument to their memory, where each year, after the President has placed a wreath with his own hand, the American Ambassador goes also to offer a floral tribute in honor of the boy martyrs. The President listened gravely and at mention of the wreaths bowed slightly in acquiescence.

It was here that American diplomacy, of a high order, informed by intelligent sympathy, projected itself on the disturbed psychology of the moment. Mr. Howard, a typical Saxon, blue-eyed, smiling, sunny of look and nature,— his sweet American girl-wife clinging to his arm,

— had listened with rapt attention and serious mien. I attribute to him a high order of diplomacy, because his words and manner seemed exactly right. Mrs. Howard confided to me afterwards that she was sure he would say something.

"I am glad, Mr. President," he began, and his tone was courteous as it was untroubled, "that in later years, during the French intervention, my country was enabled to perform a service for Mexico."

It was then President Diaz pronounced these words which I shall always remember:

"Nations are like boys. When they are young, they quarrel. When they are older, they help each other."

The situation was saved. Did the President sense our anxiety or our relief? The hero of many wars might well be insensible to the trepidations of mere mortals. Yet if he was quite unconscious of ours, why did he at that moment turn and graciously offer his arm to Mrs. Howard? Her spirits now regained their natural buoyancy and sweetness. Did the President speak English? He regretted that he did not. Naturally she demanded an interpreter, and I was chosen for this useful if difficult office. My Spanish was almost nil and my embarrassment was heightened, inasmuch as I had heard that while the President did not converse in English, he understood it quite well. But by this time, his direct and simple kindness, which only enhanced his nobility of manner, had cast upon us such a magical charm, that all that followed took on a natural, almost a homely quality. I even felt that blunders in Spanish would be regarded with indulgence.

Meantime Mr. Howard had adjusted his camera and begun the business of snap-shotting the President. Trotting about him in most nonchalant fashion he photo-

graphed him at various angles, and then, with his most polite if somewhat brief American bow, he would wave his hand toward an adjacent chair and say, "Please be seated, Sir!" And the President of Mexico, the "Man of Iron," with composed and serious look, but with, I was certain, an amused twinkle in his eye would seat himself to be photographed. The remarkable thing was that, as I have said, all seemed perfectly natural.

It was during luncheon, where we were unostentatiously served by an Indian butler, that President Diaz spoke of Mexico, and especially of the friendship existing between Mexico and the United States. He said it was our revolution and achievement that had heartened Mexico to cast off the yoke of Spain; that Mexico's government was modeled, so far as possible, after ours.

Mr. Howard then likened Hidalgo to Washington; Juarez to Lincoln; Diaz to Grant. The President then proposed the health of the President of the United States. A curious mistake occurred while we were at table, showing the difficulty of social intercourse between people of different tongues. Mr. Howard, who was a brilliant talker, and who manifested implicit though somewhat misplaced confidence in the versatility of his interpreters, desired to give an essentially American toast in honor of the President. He began with a reference to our favorite actor, Jefferson, and turning to the President said, "Sir, may you live long and prosper!" Senator Herrera, who was in excellent spirits and eager to aid Mr. Howard, said rapidly, "He desires to honor the memory of their great president Jefferson." I was too rattled to interpose in time, and the toast was politely drunk.

It was when he spoke of Mexico and her future, that Diaz glowed as with an inner flame. Sometimes his eye flashed,— again it softened and became suffused. We

were awed and deeply affected. We felt that we were in the presence of a great and holy passion,— the passion of a patriot for his country. Somehow I forgot his greatness,— his eyes filled with tears as he talked of his hopes for Mexico. But I saw the great compelling motive of his life, his love of country.

The President walked with us to the elevator in the enclosed garden which descends through a shaft cut in the solid rock. In taking leave of him, Mrs. Howard desired me to express our gratitude for his exceeding kindness, and this I endeavored to do. "You merit it," was his reply. We were silent throughout our return drive to the city, through the Paseo de la Reforma. The magnitude of our enterprise had begun to dawn upon us. We had been for a whole forenoon with one of the great rulers of the world; yet so indulgent was his kindness, for the time we had only realized that we were happy.

The good and gentle Senator soon afterwards returned to his estates in the northern part of the republic and my American friends continued their journeyings to other countries. A year later Mr. Howard wrote me, "I have always intended to write an account of our morning with President Diaz at Chapultepec; but he is such a big fellow, I am afraid to tackle him." I confess to the same feeling, a feeling of awe, of veneration. Yet it was a real experience,— the biggest one of my life. And now, of that party of friends who went to pay their homage to Mexico's president on Chapultepec heights, I alone remain.

Throughout the ensuing years I saw the President constantly. I saw him reviewing the army on field days, presiding at official ceremonies, laying corner-stones, dedicating edifices. He was always unchanged,— always

Garden of Chapultepec

Gate to Chapultepec military college

alert, impassive, clear-eyed, commanding, dignified: always on time, no matter what the hour or the weather, thus quietly enforcing the rule of promptness in this pleasant land of *mañana*. It seemed that in this habit of punctuality, as in all his daily life, he was modestly and unobtrusively setting a good example to the men in Mexico, whether native or foreign. And while the light beats fiercely on the President's chair as on the throne, no stain on the private life of Diaz has been revealed, even to his enemies.

As for the achievement of President Diaz, all the world knows that he went into office as provisional president in 1876, it being formally decreed by Congress in April of the following year that he serve as Constitutional President for a term expiring in November, 1880. He declined reëlection, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution. At the expiration of the term of Gonzalez in 1884, Diaz was again elected. One of his first acts was to reduce the President's salary from $30,000 to $15,000. He established schools and compulsory education. He made Mexico safe for foreigners, and invited them to come in and develop her marvelous resources, mineral, agricultural, industrial,— to the advantage of Mexico and to their own enrichment. He once told me, in course of conversation, that he welcomed the coming to Mexico of young, intelligent, constructive Americans. He made possible the complete railway systems, which have brought about a remarkable development in national and international communication, both industrial and intellectual. Above all, he fostered and maintained peace for thirty years.

In order to justly appreciate the achievement of Diaz, we should note the following chronological events, as affecting the social and political evolution of Mexico.

1325 The Aztecs (ancient Mexicans) took possession of the Valley of Mexico. Their origin is mystery. At the time of the Spanish conquest, the Aztecs had either subjugated or were at war with the other Indian nations.
1502 Montezuma became Emperor of the Aztecs.
1519 Cortés landed on the Mexican coast.
1520 Montezuma died.
1521 Cortés captured the Aztec capital, now Mexico City.
1522 The first Catholic church was founded in Mexico.
1527 All the picture-writings and other manuscripts of the Aztecs were taken from the national archives and burned.
1531 The miracle of the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Patroness of Mexico.
1547 Cortés died.
1571 The Inquisition was established in Mexico.
1810 The priest, Hidalgo, proclaimed Mexican Independence.
1811 Hidalgo was captured and shot.
1813 First Mexican congress.
1814 First Mexican constitution.
1820 Inquisition was suppressed.
1821 Mexican Independence was consummated.
1822 Iturbide was named Emperor. Santa Ana declared for a republic.
1823 Iturbide abdicated. Monroe Doctrine proclaimed. Iturbide shot.
1835 Rebellion of Texas.
1845 Annexation of Texas.
1846 United States war with Mexico.
1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.
1859 Reform laws promulgated by Juarez.
1862 French army invaded Mexico.
1864 Maximilian was crowned Emperor.
1865 Mr. Seward's note to France, demanding the withdrawal of her army.
1867 French army withdrawn. Diaz captured Puebla. Maximilian was shot. Diaz captured City of Mexico.
1876 Diaz proclaimed Provisional President.
1877 Diaz elected Constitutional President.
1880 Gonzalez elected President.
1884 Diaz elected President.

San Ipolito, Mexico City, the first church built after the conquest

During Mexico's centenary celebration in 1910, on the birthday of President Diaz, which falls on September 15th, the day preceding that of Mexico's independence, I passed before him in line with the visiting newspaper men, who were the guests of the Mexican federal government. We had been advised not to address him in English. When I shook his hand, I said in Spanish, "May you have a very long life, Sir, and may the country continue happy!" He gripped my hand firmly, smiled and bowed, and I passed on to make way for the next man in line.

President Diaz should have a long life. He comes of a hardy race and his habits are conducive to longevity. His magnanimity has long since elevated him above any personal ambition or self-interest. His identity is merged completely with the national life. And in the future peace and prosperity of Mexico he will continue to find happiness. He may see firmly established the era he so confidently proclaimed when nations, grown older, help one another.

CHAPTER V

Peaceful Morelia: Lake Patzcuaro: Tzintzuntzan: Uruapan and its Boom: A Fortunate Washout: Progress Comes to Him Who Waits: Products of Uruapan: Ideal Climate in the Tropics: Something About Saddle-Horses: Michoacan and the Tarascos: Burial of a Tarasco King: Solemnity of the Indians: Their Arts and Crafts.

AT the house where I was staying were young men from every part of Mexico. Pleased at my enjoyment of their country, they wished me to see the whole of it, and from them I had much advice about traveling. A city they especially recommended was Morelia, the capital of Michoacan, assuring me that the Cathedral was the finest in the republic. On the same line were Lake Patzcuaro, with Tzintzuntzan and the supposed Titian painting, and the charming old city of Uruapan, to which the railroad had just penetrated.

On a morning in June I took the 7:10 train out of Mexico for Morelia. The rains had begun their freshening work and it was good to see the gaunt horses and cattle cropping the tender grass, while an occasional frisky colt or calf kicked his heels in the air. The conductor said that was just the way he felt when he got down to a lower altitude, and expressed the friendly conviction that when I got to Uruapan I should feel that way too. As the road approached the summit, which is about 3,000 feet higher than Mexico, I began to be

very hungry. Fortunately there were Indian women at every station with food — such as it was!

At Flor de Maria which we reached at 12:10 P. M. there was a good substantial dinner; and from that point the train glided down through a gently rolling country, where the green plains stretch away on every side, with an occasional hacienda or white church tower, till they are lost in the blue of the mountains.

We arrived at Morelia about eight o'clock in the evening. It is a restful city, built on a hill which slopes gradually on every hand, affording perfect drainage, and is swept by cool breezes from the mountains. There is little noise at night save the monotonous cry of the street vendor. The city is brilliantly lighted by electricity, which makes the streets, almost deserted after nine o'clock, seem still more solitary. Even the Cathedral towers have each a three-light cluster of incandescents. The Morelia Cathedral deserves its fame for beauty. The church is flanked on either side by a plaza filled with tropical verdure and blossoms. I have never seen a city with so many plazas. In all, the trees and plants have that casual arrangement which is the perfection of landscape gardening, and seems peculiar to Mexico.

Morelia is a city of fine buildings, massive enough to last through the ages. One constantly wonders where the people are. There are few carriages of any description, but I saw many fine saddle horses. One gets the impression of wealth on every hand, in the buildings in general, but above all in the churches. A unique group are the church of *Las Monjas,* with the sumptuous *Colegio de Guadalupe* for girls on one side, and the very plain but orderly barracks elbowing it on the other. The bells keep up a constant warning for the faithful.

From the college come sweet-faced children to buy dulces at the street corner. Soldiers lounge in front of the barracks, and within are heard the bugle call and drum-taps. The most noticeable movement in the city is at night and morning when the women carry water from the various fountains, an ever-graceful and interesting sight. The people are invariably soft-spoken and courteous.

I saw a lot of prisoners at work on the street, and as none had really bad faces I asked what they had done. My informant crooked his elbow and placed his thumb suggestively to his lips. Too much *tequila* (brandy)! This gentleman was reclining on the edge of a fountain. The soldier in charge was leaning against a telegraph pole. The prisoners, with one or two exceptions, were resting on their shovels. I sank into a convenient stone seat, and we all rested.

The city of Morelia is named for the great Morelos, the formation of his name suggesting that of Bolivia from Bolivar. The population is estimated at thirty-seven thousand. I shall never cease to question the accuracy of these figures.

I took my departure at 7 A. M. A number of the inhabitants were in sight but the only active members were the porter with my trunk, and his reproduction, on a small scale, with my basket balanced on his head.

The road between Morelia and Patzcuaro presents a vista of more rolling prairies, towering mountain-ranges and the beautiful Patzcuaro lake. The ride takes two hours. At Patzcuaro an Indian transferred my trunk and ran in front of the mules all the way to the hotel to unload it. He then constituted himself my guide for all expeditions, and offered to see me through on horseback or to tote me as he did my trunk if I

Cathedral of Morelia

preferred. I knew I should like Patzcuaro because the Morelia people said it was ugly. It is an ancient pueblo, built on a hill, which slopes away to the blue waters of the lake. At the back of the town are thick woods, and the square in front of the hotel is shaded by one giant tree where a fountain splashes clear water into the women's ollas. Even men carry water in two jars balanced on the ends of long poles and none of them leaves the fountain without a rest and a dish of gossip. The air here is delicious. At first sight Patzcuaro impresses one as ugly, but take a ten minutes' walk to the adjacent hill and you will change your opinion. Below you lies the large and beautiful lake, with its island villages and the fishing-boats of the Indians. Beyond the lake are the mountains; back of you the pine woods. You look your fill and turn to go, and pause to look again.

Patzcuaro is chiefly interesting for having been the ancient capital of the *Chichimecas,* who are thought to have come from the North about the year 1200, and subdued the tribes that already occupied the shores and islands of Lake Patzcuaro. Indian chroniclers attribute the origin of the first people of Michoacan to a unique incident. They claim that during the emigration of the northern tribes, on reaching the lake of Patzcuaro, many of the people stopped to bathe. The others, by advice of their gods, who doubtless disapproved of the bathing habit, surreptitiously gathered up their friends' clothing and departed.

The ancient victims of this too-practical joke were so infuriated, that they resolved to cut the acquaintance of the rest of their tribe for good and all. They camped on the spot, and so great was their hatred for the jokers, they even changed their language. Whatever the be-

ginnings of this race, it was a large and powerful one, second only to that of Mexico proper, at the coming of the Spaniards.

It is noteworthy that the Indian king *Miguangage,* who had his seat at Patzcuaro, left no heirs for the reason that his first son was killed by lightning, and his others put to death by his own orders, in punishment for their crimes.

The last king of Michoacan bore the nickname *Caltzontzi* [Old Shoe], bestowed by the Aztecs in token of their scorn for his cowardly surrender to the Spaniards. This base monarch caused the murder of his brothers, fearing in them rivals for the throne. His people and the Aztecs were old enemies, and when the brave Cuauhtemoc sent his ambassadors proposing they should join forces against their common foe, he refused to consider their offers, and had them put to death. It is supposed he imagined the Spaniards would content themselves with taking Mexico, and leave him undisturbed; but when Cortés sent his troops, under Montaño, he received them without resistance and went in person to the capital to offer submission to the conqueror. He continued king in name for a number of years, but finally fell into the hands of the cruel Nuño de Guzman, who, after robbing him of all his treasure, had him burned alive.

The *Michihuacanos* believed in the immortality of the soul and in the existence of God. They also worshiped idols and practised human sacrifice. Michoacan means "country of fishes." The name was bestowed by the Aztecs. When the conquerors came, the Indian nobles gave them their daughters, calling them *tarascue* which means "sons-in-law." The Spaniards, hearing this word constantly, corrupted it into *Tarascos,* and applied

it to the Indians themselves, who are still known by this name.

Friday is market-day at Patzcuaro. Then the Indians come from far and near with their wares, and the plaza is crowded from sunrise. Among the things displayed are fruits in great variety, delicious fish (a tiny one, the size of a sardine, and a larger white one not unlike perch in flavor), and ducks. There is an abundance of a red earthenware, without ornament but apparently very strong; also the curious *capote,* or Indian rain-coat, woven from palm leaves. At this season every peon carries or wears one, and as he is often a wild-looking creature to start with, this shaggy, bristly covering completes the picture of a sure-enough Indian. The price is fifty cents for a fine large one, and it is a temptation to carry one away, unwieldy as it is. The weaving, which shows on the inside, is very close and firm, and the cape is said to shed water like a duck's back. The Indian may sell what he brought to market but he carries another load home. Indeed, as one seldom sees one of the genus pure and simple who is not toting a pack, it is not hard to believe the statement that when he has nothing to carry he loads up with ballast.

I left Patzcuaro early on market-day to see Tzintzuntzan and the picture. With a good horse the ride may be easily made in two hours. The road was thronged with Indians on their way to market. There were trains of burros laden with the red pottery, and the driver always carried as much as one of the burros. There were women, with great baskets of fruit, and the inevitable youngsters slung on behind. If you look close enough at an Indian woman's pack you are pretty sure to see a small pair of bare feet projecting from the midst of baskets and sacks. No wonder these young-

sters grow up to have the endurance of pack-animals themselves, jolted as they are from the day of their arrival, over rough roads, rain or shine, always in the fresh air, suckled in the open, with the ground for a cradle. It means more than ordinarily, for an Indian to say, "the mother that bore me." That mother never locked him in to be burned alive by the explosion of a kerosene lamp. When she got ready to sally forth, she simply caught him up in her rebozo and tossed him on her back. Then she trotted off about her business, a mile or twenty, as it happened; and he might sleep, wake, coo or howl as he preferred, it was all the same to her. I saw one man, mounted on a small burro, and carrying a very young infant on his arm. One often sees a brawny peon carrying a baby as tenderly as though he loved it.

The strangest object was a very small article that a young Indian had wrapped in his zarape. He was carrying it as though it were an infant, but as he passed I saw a shock of coarse, reddish hair and my curiosity prompted me to call him back and ask what he had. "Un marranito, señor," he replied, opening the zarape, and there sure enough, lay a baby pig sleeping as peacefully as a child. His nurse eyed him fondly, and I was so surprised my genius for asking questions deserted me. I shall never cease to wonder if that pig was intended for sacrifice, or if he had been regularly adopted.

Tzintzuntzan is embowered in trees. The first glimpse of the town is attractive, with the church tower just showing over the tops of the olives. The houses and streets are clean and the people decent and friendly in their manner. It was a fiesta and the entire populace seemed to be carrying decorations to the church, where there was to be a procession in the afternoon. Women

and children were laden with plants and flowers, and the men were carrying immense timbers to build a staging in the sacristy. The priest was a bright young Mexican with a genial manner, and impressed me as a real friend of the Indians. He had two schools under way. He readily consented to my photographing the picture, but the Indians looked on this with disfavor, and I was closely attended and narrowly watched by two patriarchs till my labors were ended. As to the painting, it is superb and would repay a longer journey. Its interest is enhanced by its quaint setting in this quaintest of old pueblos.

Tzintzuntzan was the seat of an Indian king as early as 1400. There are still extensive ruins; among them one that is said to mark the site of the palace of Caltzontzi.

I went to make my adieu to the padre who was still up to his eyes in business with his parishioners, and also took leave of the old Indians who had kept an eye on me to see that I didn't hoodoo the picture with my mysterious box. They were now more cordial that they found I was going, but quite disappointed because I could not show them my photographs then and there. They inquired where my home might be, and on my telling them in "los Estados Unidos," they asked if it was on the other side of the water or where. They said they had heard of my country which made me justly proud. I told them that to reach theirs I traveled five days and five nights. The time was nothing, but they repeated over and over, "traveling, traveling, all the days and nights on the machine."

As I left the town I took a snap-shot at the old tower, looming amid the olive trees, which are said to have sprung from shoots brought from the Mount of Olives.

What tales we hear in Mexico, as though the truth were not quite romantic enough! On reaching a crest that commands a view of the lake and islands, I stopped to use my field glasses. A group of home-bound natives were resting there, and they began whispering and pointing to the glasses. No doubt they all saw farther with the naked eye than I did with the lens, but for fun I let them all have a peep. Out of seven, but two could see at all. These were like children with a new toy, but I soon found that the landscape had no charms for them. The train was just pulling into the Patzcuaro station, and again the *maquina* (locomotive) was the center of interest.

Much of the road lies close to the lake where one gets almost a sea breeze. Although the way was filled with returning Indians, when I reached Patzcuaro the plaza still presented a lively scene, and there was a reception at the priests' college, with a brass band in attendance.

Patzcuaro is full twenty-minutes' ride by street car from the station; whereas the station is but five minutes ride from Patzcuaro; fifteen minutes representing the difference between mule power and gravity. You make the ascent with much whip-cracking and yelling from the driver, and wild scrambling on the part of the mules. The return is much like a toboggan slide, and full as exciting, if the tracks happen to be wet and the conductor does n't understand the brakes very well.

The ride on the train to Uruapan is delightful. With the descent, the landscape takes on a more tropical look, and the air becomes deliciously soft and balmy; but always with a spring-like freshness. One of the loveliest lakes I ever saw lies quite near the line of the railroad. Absolutely still, without a fleck except where the water

The blacksmith

fowl light, it mirrors the trees, the mountains and the sky.

Not only had Uruapan's fame for beauty preceded it, but I heard from a Mexican gentleman on the train a detailed account of the shooting and slashing affair held a few days since by the robbers and gendarmes, at the house of the former. Dancing was on the cards and though the gendarmes, who were self-invited guests, went at an unfashionably late hour, their hosts received them with open arms, *i. e.,* knives and pistols. One gendarme succumbed to a bullet, another to a blow from a machete. A third received wounds from which he died the next day. At this juncture more guests arrived in the persons of the *Jefe Politico* and the soldiers. One robber was taken. The others escaped to the mountains, where two were captured and shot. In the meantime the first prisoner had been executed close by the cemetery to save a funeral procession. It was also rumored that a female robber who had been aiding and abetting her admirers was sent to keep him company. The small local sheet, *El Amigo del Pueblo,* touched lightly on the affair, and pleaded lack of time and space to go into details regarding six more bandits whose obsequies would take place the following day. This was all discussed in the town "under the rose," but to the casual observer Uruapan's serenity remained unruffled. There were plenty of swarthy barefooted soldiers lounging about the *cuartel;* the town was patrolled day and night by uniformed (and barefoot) gendarmes, and occasionally a body of *rurales* rode through on their splendid horses. Clearly the Jefe Politico was a man of nerve and action, and meant to make Uruapan and its surroundings as secure for residents and visitors, as other parts of the republic.

When we reached Uruapan it had been raining. We

boarded the stage which was drawn by a spike-team of mules; but the roads were heavy and the "point of the spike" refused to be driven, turning around and trying to climb on the front seat where I sat with the driver. The latter, who was yelling "like a wild Indian," gave me the reins at this juncture and got off to straighten out things. He took the obstreperous leader by the head and yelled: I pounded the wheelers on the back and yelled as near like him as possible: there was a plunge, a lurch, and we were off; the driver regaining his seat by a sort of handspring, and continuing to emit yells at the rate of a new one a second, till we landed at the hotel.

It was a new hotel of two stories, with large, clean, airy rooms, tile floors and iron bedsteads. Prices were fifty cents daily for all except rooms on the street which were one dollar. The restaurant was separate, the proprietor himself superintending the cooking. The service was good and cost a dollar a day.

Uruapan is built on the hillside, and commands an extended view of the valley and the mountains beyond. The surrounding roads are good and so are the saddle horses. At the time I arrived, Uruapan was having a boom and did n't know whether to be glad or sorry; nor what to do with it. A boom is a thing that strikes a town like a cyclone, only worse; for while your cyclone does a neat job, removing the town carefully and effectually, the boom simply whisks it up in the air, toys with it a while, and then lets it down so hard that it takes the rest of its natural life to get its breath again. Uruapan's boom I rejoice to say was not of this dangerous character. It was a mild, indolent, mañana boom, tempered by siestas and church festivals. The climate undoubtedly had something to do with keeping it from becoming unmanageable. It is true new houses were being built and many

old ones repaired; but in the time of rains one can't be expected to carry *adobes* and work in the rain. Again if the sun shines, just as likely as not it is some one's *dia santo,* and there you are again. Seeing some workmen loitering in quite a pretentious building evidently about half-completed, I asked them when it would be finished.

Pues quien sabe! It had already been six years underway, and it would take at least three more. The señor must realize that it is a question of much time to build so big a house.

In this way Uruapan's boom was progressing in a slow and dignified manner, without any fuss.

Another thing Uruapan had not fully made up its mind about was the railroad, which caused the boom and was erecting substantial passenger and freight depots of gray stone. Of course the maquina lands one at the capital inside of twenty-four hours. But one could always go on a horse in nine days. The road was quite good, when it was not raining, with only occasional *bandidos,* which gave opportunity for a little pistol practice. True rents were higher and for that matter everything brought a better price than formerly. Tourists come with the maquina and their money is good money. All the same, things were very well as they were; and if the railroad had actually arrived, it was no fault of Uruapan's.

This was all perfectly natural; and while, were it not for the railroad, I should not have been there, I could sympathize with Uruapan. When we have lived for three centuries and some odd scores of years, conserving the customs and traditions of our fathers, leading a quiet, peaceful existence, undisturbed except by an occasional revolution, conducting our affairs, public and private, not as the outside world would have us perhaps, but as we

ourselves approve and prefer, is it strange if we regard with apprehension mixed with distrust the approach of that strange, unrestful thing called "progress," which comes with the maquina of the foreigner and is spelled with a capital "P"?

I was glad that I reached Uruapan before the moss of three centuries had been seriously disturbed. The railroad took me there, and then, owing to a timely washout, the trains stopped running. Uruapan, once more isolated, began spelling "progress" with a small "p." The whistle of the maquina no longer disturbed our morning slumber. I imagined that I detected a covert look of satisfaction on the faces of the *dons,* as we assembled leisurely at the post-office to await the arrival of the mail, which came on horseback. Truly it was like old times! It gave one time to look about a bit and talk with one's friends. Then too, there was always the subject of the mail to fall back on. There is a delightful sense of chance, of uncertainty about a horse which a maquina has no part in. Will the mail arrive this morning, this afternoon, or not at all? Of course if the mail mozo be on good terms with his sweetheart, who lives in the next village, the chances are that he will dally, and hence the mail will be quite late. If they have quarreled, his horse will be the sufferer, and I shall have my letters before noon. I am therefore divided between a friendly interest in the good fortune of the mail mozo, and the desire to have my letters. When I receive them, twenty steps will take me to a comfortable bench in the garden in front of the church, which is full of roses, and shaded by magnificent ash trees, whose moss-covered trunks and great size proclaim their age. The old church, whose front is a dull terra-cotta, has also its garniture of emerald moss on its cornices and moldings. God and

The road to Uruapan

Falls of Tzaráracua, Uruapan

the Bishop forbid that church ever being scraped or renovated!

The churches in Uruapan are much plainer than any in Mexico and suggest in their simplicity the California missions. The building is interesting, as in all parts of the country, and seems entirely an outgrowth from natural conditions. The main building material is adobe. The roofs are usually tile, and project far over the sidewalks, thus keeping them dry and affording shelter from both sun and rain. Bridges and gates are invariably covered by a picturesque shake roof, which shelters the pedestrian and preserves the structure. The rainy season is not a matter of a daily downpour of a few hours, with sunshine before and after, but often means a steady, soaking rain all day and all night. The town has two plazas, separated by a large building surrounded by portales. In the first there is a fountain with bushes that suggest lilacs, only their blooms are a bright pink. This plaza is filled with stalls of the Indians selling everything from fruit and sweets to shoes and clothing, while in the second are the band stand and more stalls. Another building with portales follows and then comes the really beautiful garden, with a monument to the heroes of the war of the empire. This arrangement of parks, in the center of the town, is very pleasing and shows that the founders had an eye for beauty.

Uruapan's lasting fame is built on its coffee plantations. You may ride in any direction, and pass miles of vigorous coffee plants interspersed with and overshadowed by banana palms. Many of the plants are loaded with the delicate white blossoms, whose faint aroma approaches white lilac, while others have the berry in every stage of development. Each berry has two kernels, with the exception of the highly prized Caracolillo, whose

single kernel is supposed to possess the concentrated essence of two of the others. Trees bear at the age of four years. A skilful hand can pick from five to six *arrobas* (25 lbs. each) in a day, and earns six *reales* (seventy-five cents). The berries must be gathered with great care not to break the tiny stem about a quarter of an inch long, which immediately forms another bud. In addition to bananas, pineapples, oranges, lemons, mangos, and aguacates, I also saw the *morera* tree whose leaves are quite large, fine in texture, and with a sheen that gives them the actual appearance of crinkled silk; so that they seem intended by nature for the ultimate end, which is achieved with the aid of the silkworm.

What is there to do in Uruapan, do you ask? In the morning there are the baths, with one large tank of crystal-clear water, where the sunshine streams in through the dilapidated roof, and innumerable small rooms, spotlessly clean, with whole roofs, and with showers of hot and cold water. If you go in the tank, however, you will be in fine shape for a horseback ride. The acknowledged tariff is *cuatro reales* (or fifty cents), for a good animal for half a day.

The beautiful Cupatitzio River is Uruapan's pride, and several roads lead to it with always a charming view of foaming waters and cascades. The falls of Tzararacua are very beautiful and well worth the hour and a half ride, which at the last is through the pine woods, and down a wild and picturesque cañon. The water makes a sheer descent of at least a hundred and fifty feet, ending in a large pool in the bottom of the cañon. In spite of the beauty of the falls and the vegetation, there is something rather terrible in the deep and solitary ravine, and the tremendous roar of the water, especially if one be alone. I was wondering if any unfortunate had ever

gone over the brink, when an Indian suddenly appeared from nowhere, and seemed as much surprised to see me as I was to see him. I asked him if any one had ever gone over and he said yes, that a woman had; and that he found her body in that very spot. She was bathing far up the river and was swept under by the current. He was looking for stray cattle and coming into the cañon found the poor thing on the edge of the pool. He expressed his surprise at my going there alone and said at this season the place was sad; but that after the rains, it would be the scene of much festivity, the Indians going there on Sundays to pass the day in feasting and dancing, and returning home decked with flowers and garlands.

I had a funny experience in connection with the tariff on saddle horses. The *administrador* mentioned the price, as fifty cents for half a day, on my arrival, and sent at my request for a man who rented horses. I asked this worthy what he would let me have a horse every morning for and he said seventy-five cents. Of course this was cheap, but at the same time I did n't like the idea of his raising the price simply because I was an American. I told him so, and he immediately dropped to fifty cents, but looked as though he meant to get even. The next morning he sent me a white rack-a-bones, with a hip knocked down, and his ribs projecting like barrel hoops. I returned him with some doubt as to his getting back to the pension, and the gentleman I was going out with sent for one of his own horses. The next day I interviewed a new man. He had a good horse but the price was seventy-five cents. I made further inquiries of disinterested individuals, and they agreed that there were saddle horses to burn at fifty, but evidently not for me! Every horse owner I asked said seventy-five. It was evident the owner of the white horse was boycotting me, and I determined not to be

boycotted. I heard of an ancient Mexican on the outskirts of the town who had good horses, and went to see him. He had evidently not been tampered with. He said the price was fifty cents and that he would get a horse in from his rancho for me. The next morning I paraded a spirited little pacer, in all the bravery of the old man's embroidered saddle and silver bit, before the face of my horsey friend. I was still chuckling when the mozo came the next morning with the horse, and a message from the old man, that he should have to charge me *seis reales,* each time. I sent word that I should keep to my agreement. I put the horse through that morning, thinking it might be my last ride with him, and fell so in love with him I almost felt like weakening; but I thought of the white-horse man, and determined to resort to that faithful if plodding steed known as "Shank's mare," before he should have the laugh on me. I was in the midst of dinner when there was a knock, and the old Mexican entered, in silver-trimmed charro suit, big hat, clanking spurs and a sword. *Seis reales* was written all over the wily old countenance. I whispered *cuatro* to myself and gave him a chair. I also gave him a drink, a *puro* and a cup of coffee. I showed him my spurs, my pistol, my watch, some photographs and my lemonade-shaker. I got him to tell me about his trip to Mexico and his fight with the bandits. Then I gave him another puro. When at last he tore himself away I handed him cuatro and asked him what the mozo meant by talking about seis. He professed profound ignorance and said there would never be any question of money between him and me. He had a flyer brought from his rancho that made the first pony fade into insignifiance; and he dropped in every day for coffee and a chat with his *"buen amigo el Americano."*

Uruapan was founded in 1533 by the good Fray Juan de San Miguel, who seems to have been a second Las Casas in his devotion to the Indians. Nothing is known regarding his birthplace, nor when he came to New Spain. He appeared in 1531 with another priest named Antonio de Lisboa, among the Indians of Morelia, which was then called Valle de Olid after the Spanish captain, who took possession of Michoacan in the name of his sovereign. The original name of the town was later changed to Valladolid. These poor priests, barefooted and in rags, with but five *reales* between them, won the confidence and love of the Indians and built a Christian church. Fray Juan de San Miguel subsequently traversed the whole of Michoacan, collecting the frightened Indians, converting them to Christianity, founding pueblos and building churches. He established schools in all of which music was taught, and the best voices were selected for the service of the church. Uruapan is said not only to occupy the loveliest spot in the valley, but in the whole state. When the good padre saw the beautiful river Cupatitzio with its abundance of clear cold water, he recognized an ideal place for a town, and at once began apportioning lots of land to the people, laying out the plazas and the streets, and dividing the town into barrios or districts. After directing the building of houses for the Indians and the planting of grain and fruit trees, he began the erection of the church; and later built the hospital which is said to have been the second hospital in the Americas. This was necessary for housing the multitude of poor and infirm Indians who besieged him for protection. Here they found a home and were provided with employment which made them in a measure self-supporting. The statue of this devoted man still adorns the front of the little chapel of La Purisima, and

his portrait hangs in the sacristy of the ancient church. His memory is held in love and reverence, not only in the valley of Uruapan, but in all the state of Michoacan.

While in Uruapan, I read a book written in 1639 by Fray Alonso de la Rea, who was evidently a cultured man, and who wrote in a clear and concise manner. The good padre says that in spite of conflicting opinions as to the origin of the Tarasco Indians, he is satisfied they were not the first settlers of Michoacan, but that they are actually a branch of the Aztecs or Mexicans, who were the last of the incoming northern tribes. He says the ancients of the tribe claim that their people came with eight other nations from a place called Chicomotztotl, meaning "Seven Caves." (Modern historians refer to this point, which is north of Zacatecas, merely as a resting-place on the line of march.) He was satisfied of the main accuracy of their statement, from the existence of a very old painting on cloth, which still existed in the pueblo of Cucutacato, near Uruapan. This depicted the departure of nine tribes from seven caves, and their subsequent journeyings. The padre again refers to Seven Caves as being in the country called by the Indians "Aztlan." (The best authorities are now agreed that Aztlan was in California.)

The Tarascos, who were then an offshoot from the nine tribes but principally from the *Azteca,* founded Tzintzuntzan, which comes from Tzintzuni, meaning little bird with green plumage, that sips the honey of flowers (hummingbird). Another name for the same bird was Huitzilin, from which came Huitzilopochtli, the title of the Mexican war-god. The birth of the god Huitzilopochtli typified the immaculate conception of the Indians. His mother Coatlicue, the goddess with the skirt of serpents, was sweeping the temple on the hill of Coatepec,

when she saw rolling towards her a coil of feathers. She caught it up and placed it beneath her waistband. She immediately became pregnant, and in due time, being still a virgin, bore Huitzilopochtli, who came into the world with a shield in his left hand, while his right clasped a dart or arrow of a blue color. His face was terrible from the first, showing his fierce nature. On his brow was a tuft of the bright green feathers of the hummingbird. The Indians said his name was also partly derived from Tlahuipochi, "he who vomits fire," and the god was depicted as being engaged in this pleasant occupation. In this tradition originated the manufacture of the famous green feather work for which these Indians were noted, "and thus we see that the Tarascos were led by this false god," says Fray Alonso.

Among the most admirable qualities of these people, was their ingenuity, which was not confined to one or two materials, but showed itself in all they did. "Thus their works are known and applauded throughout the world." They were particularly successful as sculptors, and so skilful in painting that all the churches of this province are adorned by hangings and pictures made by these same Indians; "with such beauty of color, that we need not envy even the brush of Rome!" They were the inventors of foundry-work, and before the conquest made sundry small castings which they bartered with the other nations in trade. Under the guidance of master workmen, who came with the frailes, they became wonderfully efficient in making bells, trumpets and sackbuts. (The clock bells in the church at Uruapan are literally "silvered-toned.") Among the articles of feather-work were pictures, images, shields, tapestries, miters and robes. The Periban painting (on wood) was invented here. It is not only beautiful, but so lasting as to be

hardly affected by time; seeming to become part of the wood itself and lasting while the wood lasts. The process consists in applying first a coat of varnish, and rubbing it dry. The pattern or drawing is then pricked into the wood with a graver, and the colors laid on and rubbed with the palm of the hand, until a gloss equal to the finest lacquer is obtained. The articles made are writing desks, boxes, trunks, *tecomates,* vases, trays, bowls and jars. This craft seems to have deteriorated, at least as to variety. The Indians still make a number of small articles that are very attractive.

The Tarascos are also famous for their life-like sculptures of the body of Christ, which are prized throughout Europe. It is true, they had their first examples of the effigy in those brought by the priests; but they are the inventors of a remarkable paste which lends itself wonderfully to the work. To make this they cut the young corn stalks and extract the heart, which they grind into a pulp or paste called *tatzingueni,* from which they make the famous *Christos de Michoacan.* These images are not only beautifully proportioned, but so light that while many are six feet high, they weigh no more than if made of feathers. In addition to all these achievements, they have also made organs entirely of wood, and possessed of most beautiful tone.

The Tarascos were and are still serious and thorough in all that pertains to their religion. Among their ancient ceremonies, the burial of their kings is noteworthy. When a monarch realized that his end was at hand, he appointed his eldest son his successor, and began to instruct him in all that pertained to his office. The new king then summoned all the nobles to assist in the last sad rites. The one who failed to appear was considered a traitor to the crown. Each was expected to condole

A Tarasco fiesta

Los gallos (cock-fight)

with the dying monarch and to bring some rich gift. At the last moment all were denied entrance to the death chamber, unless some one proclaimed himself able to avert the fatal stroke. When all was over, every one was admitted and the lamentations began, followed by the pomps and ceremonials of the interment.

The body was first bathed and then clothed in a long robe, and the sandals (emblem of valor) were attached to the feet. The ankles had golden bells and the wrists, strings of turquoise. The headdress was of plumes with rich embroidery and jewels. There were splendid collars and necklaces, ear-rings, bracelets and an emerald pendant for the lower lip called *teutitl*. The body was placed on a bier and covered with a mantle, on which was painted a portrait of the dead king with all his adornments. The women were then admitted to wail and mourn over their departed lord.

The next step is to designate the men and women who are to serve him in the next world, and must suffer death to accompany him. These are named by his successor, who first selects seven women whose offices are as follows: one to bear the *bezotes* (lip-rings) used by the king, which are of inestimable value; one for jewel-keeper; one cup-bearer; one *aguamanos* (hand washer); a cook, and two servants. The men form a much larger company including one each of the following named: keeper of the wardrobe; hair-comber; hair-brusher; wreath-maker; chair-bearer; wood-chopper; *mosqueador* (fly-killer); fire-blower; shoe-maker; perfume-bearer; oarsman; boatman; sweeper; white-washer; king's porter; porter for the women; feather-worker; silver-smith; bow and arrow maker; tavern-keeper; buffoon or jester; ("that *el infierno* may not lack in jollity!" adds the padre). There were also hunters and several doctors,

among them those who had failed to cure the king in his last illness. Then came the musicians and a host of volunteers, who, if worthy people, were not allowed to carry out their design of self-sacrifice.

The funeral procession left the palace at midnight, preceded first by people weeping and cleaning the way and then by the victims, whose heads were adorned with wreaths and their bodies painted bright yellow. Next came the musicians with clarinets, trumpets and drums of tortoise shell. The bier was borne on the shoulders of the sons and chief nobles, and accompanied by many torch-bearers, all chanting as they went the glories of the departed, together with the praises of his successor. On reaching the temple enclosure, they circled four times the huge funeral pyre, and then placed the body on the summit, still chanting as they set it on fire. Then while it was burning, they caught and killed the aforesaid servants who were to attend their master, beating them over the heads with heavy clubs. These wretches had been previously stupefied with drink, that they might not resist. Their bodies were cast, two and two, into immense jars. This slaughter lasted till daybreak, when the ashes of the king were enveloped in the mantle which had covered the body, together with the melted jewels and ornaments, and carried to the entrance of the temple. Over the remains were placed a mask of turquoise, a golden shield, and bow and arrows. A large tomb was opened in the stairway of the temple. A noble then took the ashes of his sovereign in his arms, and, entering the tomb placed them upon a bed richly ornamented with gold and silver. A huge olla was then introduced in the shape of a man. The remains were placed in it, and the olla sealed and left with its face turned to the east, after being wrapped in mantles. The urns containing

the servants' bodies followed, with articles for domestic service, plumes, costumes for feasts and many jewels. The tomb was then closed and sealed. All who had touched the bodies bathed carefully to avoid a pest and the company returned to the palace. There they were seated in chairs richly carved, and feasted elaborately. A handkerchief was then given to each, and they were expected to remain for five days, seated in the court, with bowed heads and funereal aspect, without uttering a word to any one. During these five days no corn was ground, nor fire lighted. Later they retired to their homes to continue fasting and praying for the repose of the monarch's soul; and the nobles went every night to the temple to renew their lamentations at the tomb.

These wearisome and long-drawn-out, not to say horrible, rites must have been purgatory on earth for all concerned; and doubtless before they were ended the new king almost wished the old one had n't died. The Tarascos, who are everywhere in evidence in this land, are said to be as formal and punctilious in all observances of their present religion, as they were in the old, and serious at all times. Their ancient splendor has vanished and one almost wonders if such things have really been. They still hold the quaintest fiestas in the different barrios, where the music, decorations and customs are unique and half barbaric; but in all their feasting, drinking and dancing they preserve absolute, unmoved solemnity.

CHAPTER VI

Return to Mexico: Mexicans True Friends: Queretaro the Beautiful: The Works of Tres Guerras: The Aqueduct: A Visit to the Hill of The Bells: The Country Remained at Peace: Guadalajara the Pearl of the West: The City's Evening Life: In Beauty's Ranks: The Charro Horseman: Things that are Different: Social Customs: An Inquisitive Shopkeeper.

URUAPAN'S boom never came to life again during my stay of four weeks. This was due to the heavy and continuous rains and to repeated washouts on the railroad, which prevented the running of trains, without which no boom can survive. Despite the daily downpour, the mornings were usually fine, and I seldom missed an early ride, often returning as fast as my horse could run in a warm, drenching rain. The storms are sudden and violent, and while Uruapan has a temperate and quite ideal climate, it is situated on the edge of the hot country, which it in some ways resembles.

I began to long for Mexico City, and feeling rested and refreshed by the balmy air and constant out-of-door exercise, and with nerves relaxed by the lower altitude (Uruapan's altitude is but 5,500 feet) I resolved to return to Mexico. I had heard that the road-bed was being repaired, but as rumors were vague as to when the trains would go through, I engaged a mozo, with saddle and pack-animals, to convoy me in the direction of the capital, with the agreement that he should not desert me until he saw me on board a railway train. This gave

Fountain in Mexico City; monument to Cuauhtemoc in the distance

me an opportunity to see the rich coffee plantations, through which we were riding all day. Fortunately for me the rains held off, and I enjoyed the journey, which was marred by but one accident. The mule that was carrying my trunk got mired in a mud-hole and sank rapidly until only her head and the top of my trunk were visible. The mozo jumped off his horse and leaped in after her and I feared both would be lost. But at that moment a number of pack mules came in sight, from the opposite direction, and the two Indians who were in charge of them jumped off their horses and into the mud-hole to help my mozo. It was a funny sight but for them doubtless a common occurrence. With grunts, whistles and cheerful ejaculations, among which was the familiar "Andale!" they half-shoved, half-lifted the mule out of the mud-hole. A more good-natured bit of "lend-a-hand" work I never saw, and while I gave them money, it seemed a poor return for their prompt and friendly aid. The best of all, though, were the compliments exchanged between them and my mozo on parting, when they gravely lifted their hats to each other.

Shortly after sundown we arrived at the railway junction of Acámbaro, where I found the road intact, and where I shared the kind hospitality of the American foreman who was living in a box-car, and who made me welcome to supper and a bed. The following morning I got a train for Mexico City, arriving there late that night.

I now began to appreciate the pleasures of friendship with the Mexicans. Don Juan, my other fellow-boarders, and my hostess received me so kindly as to make my return seem a veritable home-coming. They plied me with questions about the cities I had visited, and I then observed what always impressed me while in

Mexico, namely the manifest pleasure of the Mexicans in the enjoyment of visitors to their country. After several weeks at the pleasant house in Calle San Agustin, which I soon came to regard as home, and which I made my headquarters throughout my stay in the country, I decided to go on another journey. My friends now advised me to visit Queretaro, the capital of the state of the same name, famed for its fine churches, and Guadalajara, capital of the state of Jalisco, which for its many charms is often called "Pearl of the Occident." Don Juan, whose vacations were near, invited me to visit him at his home, which was in Lagos, a city I must pass through in going north. This was my first invitation to visit the home of a friend, and I accepted it with pleased anticipation. We accordingly agreed that after a month spent in visiting Queretaro, Guadalajara and Guanajuato, which the Howards had told me was the quaintest, most picturesque city in Mexico, I should proceed to the city of Lagos, where Don Juan would meet me at the station. And such was my trust in Don Juan's loyalty I had no more doubt that I should find him there at the appointed time than that I should be there myself.

Don Juan further showed his interest in my travels by accompanying me to the train, which left for Queretaro at nine A. M. The custom of seeing friends off in Mexico is immutable. The time has been when a Mexican friend would rise before daylight to accompany me to the train and I knew protestation would be vain. It is customary between friends. It would have been the same to Don Juan had the Queretaro train left at midday or at midnight. With a hearty hug, which I now participated in as naturally as hand-shaking, we said "Adios!" and "Hasta luego!" which means "Until soon!" and I was once more *en camino* (en route).

We reached Queretaro in the middle of the afternoon. I was tempted to believe that the cargador who hailed me, saying, "Here I am, my chief!" had run all the way from Mexico he looked so natural. I have heard strange tales of these Indians traveling across lots and beating railway trains. He held up his badge to show me his number, assuring me I could trust him, so I handed my traps through the window. A street car ran from the station to the center of the city and on reaching the terminus, the driver, who was *Indio legitimo,* wound the reins round the brake and politely escorted me to my hotel. Centavos are but slight return for such courtesies as these.

It was at the hotel, however, that I discovered my star was really in the ascendant. I had long heard of Doctor S—— as a charming and cultured man who, after traveling the world over, had settled on Queretaro for a home. I thought I might venture to introduce myself on the strength of our having a mutual friend; but resolved to be most discreet. Foreign residents, in good standing in Mexico, do not as a rule suffer from any lack of visitors. Judge of my amazement then when the doctor, after regarding me searchingly for a moment, asked, "Are you the man who likes Mexico?" I put on a bold front and answered, "At your service." Then I cast a surreptitious glance over my shoulder half expecting to see a gendarme at the door. What had I ever said about doctors? But the doctor did n't turn me over to the authorities. He took me under his benevolent wing then and there. As a result I had an opportunity to view the art treasures of this ancient city, as only one with a friend at court can do, and to hear the world-reminiscences of a most interesting man.

Our first visit was to the Governor's palace. The

doctor said he had business at the palace, asking with an apology if I would mind waiting for him a few minutes. He led the way into the reception sala and called my attention to the magnificent chairs and tables of solid mahogany, beautifully carved, and the great mirrors in their superb gold frames. Then a gentleman appeared in the door at the end of the sala and bowed. The doctor arose and asked me to accompany him. We passed into an adjoining room and I found myself in the presence of the Governor of Queretaro. Had I realized the honor before me I should have been a bit nervous and tried to think what I should say. My anxiety would have been needless, however, for no visitor could be ill at ease with Governor Cosio. Like many distinguished men, he possessed the courtesy and kindliness that are reassuring and delightful to strangers. He at once addressed us in English and paid us the compliment of speaking English throughout our visit. He was a very handsome man in the prime of life, elegant, dignified, yet singularly unassuming. I shall remember our visit as a most delightful experience.

We afterwards saw the palace. The museum, which occupies one of the smaller salas, is an impressive and significant exhibit. There are the relics recalling the tragic end of a dream-empire, and the sad fate of Maximilian, Miramon, Mejia and Mendez. One of the most interesting objects is the rusty lock, through whose keyhole the famous Corregidora (chief magistrate's wife) Doña Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez, a prisoner in her own house by order of her husband, sent a whispered message to Hidalgo that his plans were discovered, thereby precipitating the *grito* (cry) of independence and the revolution. A portrait of this noble dame shows a strong commanding face, suggesting the patrician, but above

Two views of the patio in the federal palace, Queretaro

all the fearless, patriotic spirit, ready to do and dare all for her beloved country.

Queretaro's churches are superb. They are quite different from those of Mexico, Puebla and Morelia. It was here that Tres Guerras lavished the wealth of his wonderful genius. One need not be an artist to be affected by this man's work. The church of Santa Rosa, with its lovely tower and dome and quaint flying-buttresses, all distinctly Oriental, is startlingly beautiful. Much of the interior is by Tres Guerras' own hand. The main altar has been destroyed, but the side altars with their magnificent gold and green ornamentation are still left. The paintings are Tres Guerras': the exquisite crucifix is his: and all are perfect. The end of the sacristry is filled by a large canvas showing the old convent garden, with the nuns at their duties among the flowers. From the church, where we had been received kindly by the good padre, a gentle and courteous man, we wandered into the old convent gardens and through the orchard, under drooping boughs and trailing vines. On every side towered masses of solid masonry. The convent is now used as a hospital but it is so extensive that a large portion of it is necessarily unoccupied.

I have written of Santa Rosa because it is the crowning glory of Queretaro. Every one will tell you that. Even the Indian of whom you ask the name of another church will inquire anxiously if you have seen Santa Rosa. Another splendid building is the old convent of the Augustines, now the Federal Palace. It has the finest patio I have seen, with a lovely old fountain and corridors of the rose-colored Queretaro stone, magnificently carved. The gorgeous tower of the church, seen from the patio, never finished yet grand in its incompleteness, adds the sadly poetic note common to Mexico's

ancient edifices. Santa Clara, San Felipe, Santo Domingo and many others are also very imposing. I know little about building but revere it above all the other arts, and realize dimly its influence on humanity. Not all pictures nor all music are for all people; but buildings are. I felt this as never before when the Indian inquired so anxiously, "Have you seen Santa Rosa?"

Another example of wonderful building is the great aqueduct which brings an abundance of crystal-clear water to Queretaro. First you must see it by day. Note its seventy-two arches, the center one more than sixty feet in the clear and its great length of over six hundred meters. Then go again at moonrise. The arches cast their long shadows across the quiet valley and the ruined hacienda lies white and silent in the moonlight. Aqueducts lend a certain stateliness to a city, like that given a mansion by a long approach between rows of trees. They are monuments to courage, skill and untiring labor and they confer on the city to which they pay tribute, all the dignity that these terms convey.

Queretaro owes her aqueduct to her noble benefactor, the Marqués de la Villa del Villar del Aguila, who gave $88,000 from his private purse. The total cost of construction was something over $131,000. It was begun in 1726 and completed nine years later. In the Plaza de la Independencia there is a fine statue of the Marqués by Diego Alamaras Guillen. It is beautifully carved from native stone and its noble proportions and life-like pose mark the sculptor a man of genius. The pedestal rises from a fountain basin, begun in 1843. The original statue was destroyed by a cannon ball during the siege of '67.

The lineal descendants of the last marqués and the

direct heir to the title is Dr. José Fernandez de Jauregui, a resident of Queretaro, whom I had the pleasure of meeting. Among the heirlooms in Dr. Jauregui's possession are the gorgeous costumes worn by his ancestors, the marqués and his lady. They are more than a century and a half old, yet the gloss of the velvet, the sheen of the satin are undimmed by time. There is a wonderful gown of emerald green velvet heavily embroidered in gold, with a little shoulder cape brilliant with cut stones and embroidery. There is a dress of apricot satin, wrought with silver and one fancies the rich beauty of the marquesa at its best in this setting. The marqués was just as resplendent in velvet and brilliants and gold embroidery with a silken *montera* (net) to hold his long tresses which have left their mark on the coat-collars. By favor of Carlos V the family were allowed to employ the royal coat-of-arms in their decorations; and in the collection are a dozen or more medallions of silk and gold, which were used on the backs of chairs and divans. There are also some black pearl ornaments which are priceless.

I like Queretaro. It is not only charming and picturesque but spotlessly clean. The air at this elevation, somewhat over six thousand feet, is mildly invigorating. I had always supposed the city's fame rested on its churches and its historic interest. In future I shall never tire of praising its perfect climate and its delicious waters. The baths of Patché in the suburbs are medicinal and peculiarly efficacious in rheumatism. The favorite bathing resort, however, is the beautiful Cañada, forty-minutes' ride by street car from the center of the city. I wish I might write more at length of Queretaro, of its hospital, orphanage, and schools, especially the fine state college, with observatory and museum attached.

The young people have every educational advantage and among them are many brilliant musicians. That night we heard in rehearsal the "Pilgrim's Chorus" from "Tannhäuser," by a full orchestra, accompanied by pianos and organ played by four fair young Queretanas. We were in the beautiful Plaza de la Independencia. The place was flooded with moonlight; the fountain was splashing softly; and on the still night air came the glorious strains of Wagner.

The second evening we climbed el Cerro de las Campanas (Hill of the Bells) to watch the sun go down and see the mountain shadows fall upon the city. Austria's emperor was erecting a little chapel there in memory of his brother Maximilian, and the Generals Miramon and Mejia. The place was freighted with tragic memories; but the quiet beauty of the scene and the contented hum of voices (the hill was covered with people) made wars and unhappiness seem dim and far-off.

Slowly the sun dropped back of the mountain, and then came the ethereal blue twilight over the city. The people were going home and we soon found ourselves quite alone save for one Indian, who remained motionless, looking intently across the valley, while a pet kid, that evidently belonged to him, went frisking about, like a dog, among the rocks. There is a strange interest attached to these dark-hued sons of the soil that I can never resist. What was he brooding over? we wondered. At last we asked him about his goat. It was very gentle, he said; just like a little dog; it followed him everywhere. He and his pet were born on the same hacienda, but now they had left their old home and come to work near the city, gathering hay for the señores of Queretaro. Hours were too long on the hacienda — often from two in the morning till eight at

The road to the hot country

night and only 18 cents a day. Now he had his little house, with his wife and one *niño* (baby) and his goat; he sometimes earned fifty cents a day, "and," he added, "one can rest a little." At present he and the goat were out for a walk. He had a bright face and seemed to enjoy telling his little history. As we said, "hasta luego," we asked him casually regarding the chapel. It was for three generals he said, who were killed at the siege. One was Miramon, the other Mejia, and the other — quién sabe, he was a foreign general who came "walking" in the revolution. We pressed him in vain for the name. No, he could not remember. "He was a stranger — who knows his name?" "But," he added solemnly, "when they were shot, the country remained at peace." Then he said, "May you go well!" and with a bound was off in the darkness followed by the goat.

After a pleasant week spent in seeing Queretaro I took leave of my new friends and went on to Irapuato, where I changed cars for Guadalajara which I reached in the early evening. Guadalajara is *simpatica*. What a delightful word that is! It expresses much in little as no other word can. It is essentially Latin. We northern peoples think it but seldom say it. In fact we have n't just the right word for it. We say a city is beautiful but that does n't mean the same; a climate is delightful but that is n't it; a person charming, fascinating, magnetic, and even then we have n't said the equivalent of simpatica. To my mind the nearest thing to it in English is, "I like." In Mexico if we like a place and its people we say they are simpaticos and that tells the story. I had always heard this of Guadalajara. At the last, some of my friends in Mexico, whose homes are there, began to caution me. "Don't expect too much," they

said, "you may be disappointed." But I had a feeling I should not be disappointed. Do we find what we look for I wonder! Not always! But the chances are largely in our favor. If we look on things in a friendly way we get the "glad eye" in return; but a supercilious stare is apt to encounter *el ojo de vidrio* (glassy eye).

The first thing that impressed me was a homelike feeling. I was not unprepared for this for my friends had said, "You will see when you are there — the *zaguan* doors open till late at night, the patios filled with flowers and electric light, the señoritas promenading in the plaza and much music everywhere." It was just as they said. The air, though rather warmer than in Mexico, was fresh and pure. It had rained in the night and the day was like a northern day after a shower.

The Plaza de Armas is very like that of Mexico in its surroundings. At the north is the Cathedral with its pointed, oriental-looking towers; the Governor's Palace, a beautiful edifice, is on the east, and at the south and west are *portales* as in Mexico. The garden is crowded with palms and flowering shrubs and the walks and benches are shaded by orange trees heavy with fruit. On Sunday morning a fine military band was playing and the seats were comfortably filled. With the flower-scented air and the golden fruit overhead I found myself quite astray as to the time of year. I could not get used to summer atmosphere when it should be fall. While October and November are delightful months in the north, they are always attended by the realization that their beauty is not for long: the decay of the year is always sad, and while the spring awakening more than atones, we know there is another autumn coming. The feeling that Mexico's delightful weather is going on and on gets us into easy ways perhaps, but I like it.

I looked in vain for the promenaders on the plaza Sunday morning. Then I went and explored the portales. The west portales were thronged with Guadalajara's fair ones, while all along against the store-fronts, were rows of chairs where people sat laughing and talking. Such lovely faces, glorious eyes and dainty costumes as I saw under the west portales!

Guadalajara is more of an evening city than any I had yet seen; that is there is more out-of-door evening life. The nights are warm and windows are left wide open. You hear the chatter of voices, the music of guitar or piano and catch glimpses of richly furnished rooms in passing. There is music on the plaza four nights in the week and it seems a general breathing spot for the people. The class line does not seem quite so strictly drawn there and all grades meet on the plaza. The young peon in a zarape holds the blue-rebozo-girl's hand in the shade of the banana palm; the more settled ones smoke calmly on the benches; ladies promenade bareheaded, arm in arm, and the babies romp about, with *ayas* at their heels. One evening it was growing dark when a small fairy in white, with a cloud of dark hair and big black eyes, detached herself from a flying band of companion fairies and did me the honor to alight beside me; that is she sat down on the same bench and began swinging her feet. Finding myself tête-à-tête with so lovely and extremely young a señorita I thought I might venture to speak to her. She was tired of playing, she informed me, and had left her friends to rest a moment. Oh, no, they were not stronger than she, a little larger that was all. I expected every moment to see a dark guardian in black shawl and white apron swoop down upon her, but nothing happened; and she sat and trilled her baby Castilian at me till suddenly

that flying band appeared again. Then with a cunning little bow and a sweet "con permiso" ("with your permission") she flew away.

While these children were frolicking after dusk on the plaza the outer walk was crowded with Indians, listening to the music. It is enough to make one like the Indians to see how unreservedly children can be trusted among them. The peon class impresses one as distinctly superior. The people are cleanly and intelligent and there seems to be little drunkenness. Is this the reason they are allowed more privileges or is it a result? A certain recognition by their betters must certainly make the serving-classes more self-respecting. Another tribute to their good behavior are the few gendarmes. I missed the lanterns of the gendarmes at every crossing that we are used to in Mexico City.

Guadalajara is an easy city to go about in. The streets are continuous instead of broken, as in Mexico City, with a different name for every square. The names of Mexico's streets are trying. When I have once left the Zocalo, I never know whether I am on Plateros or San Francisco: nor when Avenida Juarez ends and Patoni begins. Guadalajara is clean. Its great market always has the appearance of having been swept and tended. There seemed a scarceness of flowers, or perhaps I visited the market on an off day. The display of vegetables and fruits was fine. *Camotes,* the Mexican sweet potatoes, are abundant in these parts, but their Irish cousins are small as everywhere in Mexico.

The population of Guadalajara is somewhat over one hundred and twenty thousand. The altitude is about six thousand feet. Among public works nearing completion were new waterworks and modern city drainage. The waters of the Rio Grande were being utilized to the

end of supplying from four to five thousand horse-power in electricity. The canal for this work was already finished and I was told that in less than five years the city would have more than ten thousand horse-power in electricity, at a cost of from one-third to one-fourth of the present cost of steam. Guadalajara's greatest improvement, however, is the new railroad connecting this city with the Pacific port of Manzanillo, making Guadalajara the second city in commercial importance in the republic.

Guadalajara oranges are famed for their delicious flavor. And here may be tasted in its perfection the noted vino de Tequila, a pleasant but heady beverage, which is made principally near the town of Tequila, a day's journey from Guadalajara. One large hacienda produces from fifty to a hundred barrels of tequila a day for export to Central and South America.

The great charm of the country is its unending variety. The cities and their peoples retain their individuality to a surprising degree. In each place you encounter ways and customs quite different from any you have seen, and in each you hear of other places where the customs are still different. You naturally desire to visit these as well and there seems no end to the interest of traveling. In going from the capital to Guadalajara, you will notice a marked contrast in the customs of the two cities; but it takes time to appreciate the many little differences. These are largely due to climate, I think; for instance after sunset, when the air in Mexico City is rather penetrating, in Guadalajara it is just fresh enough to make one wish to be out of doors. There was comparatively little driving. I saw some stylish turnouts but the people as a rule seemed to prefer walking.

The streets are most attractive in the evening. The

ladies go for a stroll in the cool of the day, just between daylight and dark, and you see them sauntering about in light summer gowns, and frequently with heads uncovered. The portales are a favorite evening promenade. They are brilliantly lighted, and there are always chairs to rent if one cares to rest. The Sunday evening paseo, which is the event of the week, might justly be called, "A Dream of Fair Women."

There was practically no begging in the streets and I was forgetting how to say, "Que le vaya con Dios!" ("May you go with God!") which a Mexican friend told me gratified the average beggar quite as much, if not more than centavos; and which I found far less expensive. You hear little of lack of bread here. Every night the street before the cathedral is thronged with little kitchens, doing a thriving business, and there is food to burn judging from the odors. There are no *empeños* or ordinary pawn-shops in Guadalajara, there is only a *monte de piedad* and two branch offices. There is a respectable air to these places that dispels the romance. It is in your dusty, ill-smelling, sure enough pawn-shop on an out-of-the-way street in Mexico City, where the Gachupin in attendance does not deign to notice you and can with difficulty be persuaded to name a price, that the thing becomes deeply, intensely interesting, and you not infrequently find a prize.

El Baratillo in Guadalajara is as large as Mexico's Plaza Mayor. It is wholly unlike any other place. There are the usual collections of old iron, crockery and miscellaneous junk, and besides there are vegetable and fruit stands, restaurants, and places where they sell a pint of charcoal or a single stick of wood. The latter is displayed in little pyramids of four puny sticks, at three cents for the lot which I consider dear. The two

extremes of city and country meet in the Baratillo. You see the dingy collector of old clothes and scrap-iron side by side with the fresh-looking ranchero, who has tramped since sunrise the day before, behind his little train of burros laden with sugar cane, and come to sell his wares in the plaza. The former recognized me at once as his lawful prey and began producing rusty spurs, candlesticks, and old jewelry. The latter stared in open-eyed wonder, but when I inquired about the caña he promptly chopped off a hunk and invited me to try it. It is quite customary for all hucksters to ask you to prove their wares and their patrons as a rule seem hard to please. The woman with boiled *calabazas* (pumpkins) for sale is most obliging. She has them loaded on a burro in two great baskets or panniers. When a customer appears, she jabs a knife into one of the pumpkins and presents it for trial. The customer tastes, smacks her lips and shakes her head. The vendor jabs another which does n't quite suit either and so it goes on, till one is found with just the right flavor. The man who buys sugar cane gets a lot for his money. Fancy six to eight feet of long-drawn-out sweetness for five cents. When I see a peon trudging homeward with one across his shoulder, I always picture Mrs. Peon and all the little *Peones* seated in a row before their hut, complacently chewing.

The street vendor's cry is as different from that of Mexico City as though it were of another country. You miss the monotonous yet musical chant of the Indian women that we hear in Mexico, especially those that sell the little reed birds whose name is something like *chichicuilote*. Here, while everything imaginable is hawked through the streets, the vendors are nearly always men. The ice-cream man is first on the scene and

last to retire. He appears often at seven o'clock in the morning, with a tall wooden pail balanced on his head, and stopping in the middle of the street roars, "Helados por un centavo!" (Ices for one cent). He then enumerates the various flavors. His voice is harsh and guttural, as are those of all his class, and you hear him on his rounds till late at night. The man with baked *camotes* carries them on his head in an oblong wooden tray; and I saw fine fresh fish from Chapala sold in the same manner. At night, the tamale men are out and one occasionally hears a woman's voice.

English is decidedly in vogue. Many speak it readily and you constantly hear, "All right!" "How do you do?" "Good-by!" etc. It is amazing how the Mexicans acquire our language and employ it with comparative ease, without leaving their own country, when so many foreigners live in Mexico for years and never get beyond the "present indicative" verbally.

Guadalajara is the home of the *charro* horseman, but even there he is becoming infrequent. When in evidence, he wears his attractive costume with peculiar grace, as though to the manner born. Although many of the suits are richly ornamented, all have a certain distinctive air as though made for service. Some are of brown or gray cloth, with nothing to mark them save the short jacket and tight-fitting trousers. The young men affect severely plain riding suits as a foil for their richly mounted saddles and trappings. One fine-looking fellow was dressed entirely in black without so much as a silver button. His fiery little Arab was coal-black. But the saddle was the most superb thing I had seen, with dazzling silver decoration and heavy box-stirrup, apparently of solid silver. Add to this a gorgeous, rainbow-hued zarape, tightly rolled at the back of the saddle,

and you have a very splendid figure. Among the many picturesque sights of this picture-country, the charro horseman shines preëminent. In my own little collection of the mind's eye, one of the choicest bits has for one figure a handsome young charro, with all the attendant bravery the name suggests. And the other is a girl with wonderful dark eyes, and a classic profile, half-hidden in the folds of a black shawl.

A delightful part of Mexico is the suddenness with which fiestas drop down on you. I say "drop down" advisedly. A fiesta once dropped down on me and nearly extinguished me. It began on Friday and lasted over until Monday. I had not the faintest premonition that this fiesta was coming. On Thursday, I had wasted all my substance on sundry antiquities which a designing person brought me: idols, swords and the like. Friday morning, at earliest banking hours, I sallied forth to put myself in funds. The bank was closed till Monday. I had the munificent sum of thirty-five cents in my pocket, and as my only available friend at that time happened to be one who had frequently expressed his aversion to borrowing and being borrowed of, I passed three awful days. I determined not to expend one single centavo needlessly, and it was nothing short of tragedy to see those thirty-five constituents of a forlorn hope slowly but surely fading away. If you want to know what it really is to be "out in this cold world," try living three days on thirty-five cents. You can get the feeling even in Mexico. Of course I might have pawned my purchases, but it never occurred to me I had an "uncle" in Mexico.

A fiesta dropped down just as unexpectedly while I was in Guadalajara but luckily I had more than thirty-five cents in the pocket. I first realized the season, when I

found the portales crowded, and the little notion stands converted into confectioners' shops, with every sort of symbol displayed in sugar.

After all, the distinguishing traits of Mexico's various cities and their peoples are in outward and really unimportant details. The same unwritten laws govern society in all parts alike. It is an odd fact that many rules of etiquette in the neighbor-republics are diametrically opposite; and I believe few of us, either Mexicans or Americans, realize this until one visits the country of the other. In the north a family who may be newcomers in a city or locality, wait to receive the visits of those who care to know them. In Mexico, they must at once send "at home" cards to all whom they care to know. It would be the greatest temerity, on the part of a northern man, to take the initiative in saluting a lady, with whom he had slight acquaintance. Here it is the very thing he must do. Nor is this all. A stranger in a Mexican city must bow first on meeting each and every gentleman to whom he has been presented; and if he would avoid breaches of etiquette, he must be literally lynx-eyed; for his new acquaintances will make little or no sign of recognition. They regard him with their usual well-bred composure; it remains for him to do the rest. I realized all this once while strolling with some acquaintances on a much-frequented promenade. The place was crowded and the light was that trying mixture of twilight and electricity, broken by patches of absolute darkness. It dawned upon me that I was in a delicate position. People I had met but once would not bow to me first nor could I recognize them in that light! Ladies especially look so differently at different times, owing to a change in costume. I wondered which was worse, to bow to people I did n't know or to

fail to bow to those I did. The realization that I had perhaps been guilty of many omissions was annoying, and I begged my companion to sit down for a while, feeling that safety lay in inaction. But there was one girl who felt sorry for the gringo. Anyway she bowed, with a dignified yet gracious bend of the head and that bow more than atoned for all.

One more episode that is too good to be lost. I went into a shop one day and was served by the owner in person, a comely dame, "fat, fair and forty." After a few trivial remarks regarding the article I was buying, she proceeded to subject me to a rigid and searching cross-examination. Was I French, German or English and how long had I been in the country? Had I come for business or pleasure and when was I going home? Was I married or single? Had I left a novia (sweetheart) in Mexico City? Ah ha! it was plain that I had and that I was buying a gift to send to her! This I stoutly denied and said that on the contrary I was in search of a novia, at the same time casting ardent glances at my fair inquisitor. I might as well have languished at a stone image. Her curiosity was wholly impersonal and disinterested. She wanted to know because she wanted to know, and having satisfied herself, she took my money and said, "que le vaya Vd bien!" (May you go well!) as unfeelingly as though she had not just received the sacred confidences of my inmost soul.

CHAPTER VII

Visit to Lake Chapala: A Race for Dinner: A Pleasant Swimming Pool: Indian Fishermen: "El Presidio": A Ride on a Mexican Coach: Trite Truths About Silao: Sights Worth Seeing in Guanajuato: Savage Dogs: A Method of Warfare: The Cross on the Mountain: A Man's a Man for a' That.

I REMAINED for nearly a month in Guadalajara, and the longer I stayed the easier it became to stay on. It is a city of infinite charm; its life is modern yet leisurely; its people are cultured, vivacious, gay even, as compared with those in some of the more conservative cities, yet preserving always the poise and composure that are national characteristics. My fellow-boarders in Mexico City had given me letters of introduction to relatives and friends in Guadalajara, and these had been a passport to a delightful circle. I was welcomed with frank kindness into the homes of my friends, where in some instances I was addressed by my Christian name, this being the most flattering sign of favor in a Mexican home. I had long adopted the mode of addressing my female friends by their Christian names, it being the social custom for gentlemen to so address the ladies of their acquaintance, whether elderly or young. But it was in Guadalajara this was first reciprocated, and hearing my name thus for the first time in many months I experienced a thrill of pleasure, for I knew it was a tribute to my friendship with a son or a brother.

A delightful feature of social life in Guadalajara were the afternoons at the home and studios of the

Mexican painter, Felix Bernardelli, where women and men of artistic, literary and musical pursuits met for music, poetry and gossip. There were many pleasant suppers and musical evenings at the homes of friends, and again I felt the elusive yet dominating thrall that is Mexico's, and beneath whose sway weeks glide into months and easily into years. The traveler however feels it a duty to travel; yet in leaving Guadalajara, I was disconsolate. Even now, at thought of this lovely city, the desire arises to apostrophize her; yet I can think of nothing that is worthy save that name of praise and endearment,—"Guadalajara, Pearl of the West!"

My acquaintances had besought me not to leave the State of Jalisco without paying a visit to Lake Chapala, which lies on the boundary adjacent to Michoacan, and is the favorite watering-place of all that region. I accordingly set out for Atequiza, which is the railway station nearest the lake. At Atequiza, which is reached in an hour, you have your choice of a saddle horse or a seat in the stage. The owner of the horses told me he could give me one with a pace like "the rocking of a canoe on the lake." I am convinced now that he referred to the lake on a squally day, but in my guilelessness I thought he meant when it was pacific. The stage-driver declared that while he had to wait for the Irapuato train, he could give the saddle horse an hour's start and then beat it into Chapala. This prospect of a race decided me in favor of the saddle horse. A gaunt looking *caballo* was led forth, and my luggage was loaded on to a second with little black-eyed Santiago up behind as mozo and guide. Santiago said he was eleven years old, but he afterwards remembered that he was only "walking toward nine." He said one forgets now and again, and

I admitted this was true especially when one has reached his mature age. I told Santiago that if we beat the stage there was a *real* in it for him, and he thereupon informed me that there was a fine spur in one of the saddle-bags. There are about a dozen gates to be opened on the road to Chapala, at the rate of a centavo a gate, which is cheap as gates go. They separate the various ranchos. All would have been well, if in crossing one of these ranchos I had not met the head *vaquero* (herdsman). He was an interesting gentleman in silver-trimmed, black trousers, slit up the side, high russet boots and a magnificent sombrero. He opened conversation by complimenting my horse. I said yes, he was "good food for buzzards." I then praised his horse, which was really a fine one. We were jogging along conversing when suddenly I heard yelling in the rear, and there right upon us was the stage. The driver was bawling, "Andale!" and the peon beside him was throwing rocks at the eight little mules, as they tore along. The driver shouted, "Adios" and I dug my spurs into that wretched caballo feeling that I was beaten. The caballo saw things in another light. He could loaf so long as no one tried to pass him; but the thought of taking dust from eight plebeian mules was more than his proud Arab spirit could endure. He began to forge ahead with the speed of a locomotive, and the coach was left far in the rear where it belonged. The caballo had decided to let me see what he could do and he kept it up. In a jiffy we reached the top of the hill. Before us lay the lake, with the mountains beyond and the little town of Chapala lying close to the margin. It made me think of Lake Patzcuaro; but you are beside the latter before you know it, traveling by rail, while Chapala you see from afar and have all the delights of anticipation in approaching it. So we galloped down to the lake

with the fresh wind in our faces, and I was on my way to dinner when that boastful *cochero* drew up his eight-mule team before the hotel.

That the manager of the Hotel Arzapalo was a man of taste, I knew when I saw the hotel, with its clambering rose-vines, its well-kept gardens and the little pier running out into the lake, with comfortable benches at either side. When he assigned me to a room, with a view of mountain and lake combined, I was doubly sure. The memories of my ride, together with a bountiful dinner, made me content to loaf the rest of the afternoon; but towards evening I started in search of the warm mineral baths, for which the place is noted. A gentleman who knows Chapala, had said to me, "Don't go to the fine-looking bath-house with the 'Baño' sign; follow the same street till you come to some old buildings and then ask for the *tanque*." So I walked by the fine-looking baños and in an old orange orchard, I found the great swimming tank. It must be sixty feet long by twenty wide, and the bottom slopes so that at one end it is over a man's head. It is surrounded by a high wall and the palms and orange trees grow close up to it. The water is a trifle more than blood-warm, so that you feel an almost imperceptible accession of warmth in stepping into it. It is the kind of a bath that you leave reluctantly and then feel tempted to return to. The springs at Cuautla, Morelos, are nearly like these in temperature.

When I came out I asked the dueña to sell me some oranges; and she sent a boy to pick them—three big, luscious ones for two cents. An Indian was launching his canoe, and I asked him to take me in; he ran and got a little rush-bottom chair which he put in the stern, and we paddled away. There was the last flush of crimson and purple in the west and a crescent moon overhead; and I

could hear the voices of the Indian boatmen, as they rowed out through the dusk to the fishing grounds.

While the lake is often perfectly still during the afternoon, a breeze comes after sunset and soon little waves are running up on the beach. The moon makes a silver track across the water; you hear a soft lapping along the shore, and the scent of flowers pervades the shaded balcony of the hotel. The despondent traveler, who has been seeing the country by day and waging fierce wars by night, in hotels where he pays for a bed and then has to fight to hold it, will hail the *Arzapalo* as a haven of rest. The beds and bed-linen are spotlessly clean and one lies down with no misgivings as to the manner of his awakening. I could tell gruesome tales of nights spent in Mexican hotels, but I won't. Perhaps the reader is tender-hearted; and for me, it would only open old wounds anew. The *Arzapalo* has some fifty rooms, a large sala and dining-room overlooking the lake, and is provided with a bar and billiard table. The cooking is excellent and the bread is all made in the house. The hotel is situated in what is, beyond doubt, one of the loveliest and most healthful spots in all Mexico. Good hotels are a crying want in the republic, and when I encounter one I sing its praises.

Circumstances over which I had no control forced me to leave Chapala. My trunk ran amuck. I found it at Silao, but I lost — Chapala. I left it when my love was at its height. It was morning on the lake. The mists were hanging on the mountain tops, the breeze was ruffling the surface of the water, and the palms and orange trees shone emerald-green in the sunlight. I rode on top of the coach and as we approached the summit of the divide, we could see a good part of the length of the lake, some thirty leagues in all. There was the little island called

"El Presidio" where the last of the Chapaltecos, about fifty warriors, made their final stand against two thousand Spanish troops; and were only dislodged by bullets and starvation. There is a plan on foot in Jalisco, to erect a suitable monument on the island in honor of these heroic men, who fought to the end for the freedom of their people. I was not familiar with this tragic episode and the gentleman beside me told it dramatically. I looked again and again at the little island, trying to fancy the scene during the siege. Just then we reached the summit. There was a last glimpse of a great stretch of shining water, and the next minute we had crossed and were bowling down the other side to Atequiza.

If you have never ridden on a Mexican coach, you have still a new sensation in store. The Chapala coach has a cushion on top and if you are fortunate in sharing this seat, you ride *muy a gusto,* seeing the country and the manner of manipulating an eight-mule-team at the same time. There are two about the size of rabbits on the lead, a string of four in the middle, and two larger ones on the wheel. The driver has a whip, with a lash long enough to reach the leaders. His assistant has another shorter one, but his chief persuaders are rocks. The assistant earns fifty cents a day and free insurance against dyspepsia. He alights at the base of every hill and fills his sombrero full of rocks on the way up. He then shies several boulders big enough to dislocate a hip at the leaders; and when the whole team are in full gallop, he swings himself on to the box in some miraculous way — I think he stands on the hub. He could never do it if he wore shoes. When they change mules, he leads the discarded team up and down to cool them off; while the driver takes the new ones and tangles them up, so you can't tell where wheelers end and leaders begin. At

last they are off again with a whoop and a yell. People talk of Mexico as slow, but the word can never be applied either to stage coaches or street cars, when they once get started.

Some American friends had written me from Guanajuato, advising me to spend a day in Silao. They said I would not regret it, and I decided reluctantly to act on the suggestion. Somehow Silao never sounded interesting and my one impression has always centered around a very good supper that I had with the Howards when we separated there, they going to Guanajuato, which they always declared the most picturesque place in the republic. When we reached Silao, whom should I find on the Guanajuato train but the very people who had advised a day in Silao. "Hurry up!" they said, "get your luggage and come right along with us!"

"But what about Silao?"

"Oh, never mind, we'll tell you about Silao!" they answered.

What is sight-seeing compared with good-fellowship? Inside of five minutes, with the assistance of friends and cargadores I was loaded bag and baggage on the train for Guanajuato.

I made the following record in my notebook:—

"Silao is where you leave the Mexican Central for Guanajuato and get good things to eat at the station.

"The officials there are obliging and the baggage-master does all in his power to assist tourists who are trying to do impossible things in the way of train-connections.

"Silao is reputed to have the best climate in the republic; and there are hot mineral baths, some ten miles from the station, which are unexcelled for rheumatism.

"Among the industries, is the manufacture of thread for rebozos.

Moonlight on Lake Chapala

"The elevation is 6,000 feet. Population about 15,000."

It takes an hour to reach Guanajuato, first in the little train and then in the street car. When we arrived a band was playing on the plaza and the square looked bright and animated, with the señores promenading in the little park and the peones in the middle of the street. We had supper in a restaurant, where we were served by a waiter who moved faster than any mozo I have ever seen in Mexico. My friend told me he acquired this habit of velocity in the ring at the Sunday *gallos* (cock-fights). When I went to my room, there was a girl standing in the balcony of the house opposite. She looked very interesting in the moonlight as she talked across the narrow street to some one in the hotel, evidently a suitor.

The following afternoon my friends invited me to accompany them to their hacienda, which was in the mountains, southeast of the city. The views from the summit were superb, with the city lying at the bottom of the valley, and the haciendas and churches of Valenciana and Los Reyes away off on the mountain side, and just a glimpse of La Luz which lies beyond the summit. The trails are wide enough for two horses to go abreast, and their stone pavements, demolished in places, tell the story of an old and immensely wealthy mining section, where thousands of mules were constantly coming and going, laden with provisions and treasure. Like all mountain trails, these are marked at intervals by crosses. At one point, in a terrible fight between two peones, the head of one was completely severed by a machete, and rolled into the cañon below. The cross was erected at the spot where the body was found. Not long ago a burro, laden with water jars, went over a cliff, something like

three hundred feet high, and escaped with the loss of two front teeth and his cargo. On the summit are two immense balance-rocks, side by side, known as "the comadres." It seems two Indian comadres quarreled there once upon a time, and were turned into stone. They stand to this day, a warning to all passers-by to keep their temper, at least till they get over the ridge. At sunset we met the Indians, men and women, tramping over the mountains to their homes in Guanajuato. They work in the mines and the women earn from four to five reales a day, breaking and sorting the ore.

I have visited many mining haciendas in Mexico. At some there are women-folk and at others not. In the living rooms of the latter you see a pile of boots in one corner, a tangle of coats and overalls in another, and smaller articles of wearing apparel strewn broadcast. Everything is hung up on the floor. Now in the first named, it is quite a different matter. There are rows of nails, with the clothing hung up in order; and there are cabinets, made of empty candle-boxes nailed on the wall, and pictures and photographs. The hacienda I visited was of this kind. I slept in a cozy little room and there were curtains at the windows, a box-washstand with water-bottle and glass, and a fur rug. The moral for mining men is obvious.

When we started for Guanajuato the next morning it was crisp and cool. The men and women were already well up the mountain, on their way to the mines. They must have started before sunrise. Our horses were in high spirits and we had to curb them from racing down the steep trail. On arriving I took leave of my friends, and set out to explore Guanajuato, which I long had wished to know.

Of all the quaint, picturesque old cities I have seen in

the republic, Guanajuato is the quaintest and most picturesque. It is built in a winding cañon and it not only occupies the bottom, but climbs up the sides and spreads over the foothills. At the sides the hills rise so abruptly, that the summit, which is higher than the church towers, seems almost within a stone's throw. When the first charm of the place has worn off, there is a shut-in feeling and one longs for the sight of a distant horizon. To say the streets are narrow does n't express it. If you start from your hotel for the post-office, your course is a veritable zigzag: perhaps you find the post or perhaps you bring up again in front of the hotel, in which case you have only to try it over. The third time seldom fails. Wherever you go there is always the feeling that you are in a maze, and the same uncertainty as to where you are coming out. The streets are well-paved but very narrow and some of the sidewalks will not allow two abreast.

There are several trails leading into the mountains, and innumerable footpaths like stairs, cut in the solid rock. I followed a street crossing the city and found myself up against the steep side of the cañon, with nothing to do but climb for it. The stairs terminated in a narrow lane, between adobe walls and cactus hedges, which ended on the ridge. The lane was full of wolfish-looking dogs which darted out at unexpected places with teeth and hair bristling alike; but I have learned a thing or two about Mexican dogs. You have only to stoop as though picking up a rock and the most savage will turn tail or at least keep at a safe distance. A small Indian boy once put me up to this dodge. I was passing a rancho on horseback when a gaunt hound sprang out and attacked me like a fury: I think she had puppies. I did n't want to shoot her, for more reasons than one,

so I took to flight but the brute kept up with me and I expected every second to feel her fangs in the calf of my leg. I finally left her behind and farther on encountered a little peon boy jogging along peacefully on his burro, his plump, bare legs offering an apparently tempting morsel. They were quite intact however, and I asked him how he managed it. "I got down and grabbed a rock," he replied.

One afternoon about three o'clock, I set out for the white cross which tops the highest peak back of the city. It looked an hour's climb at most. At sunset I was so far above the town it looked like a toy village lying at the bottom of the cañon, but the cross was still a long way off. I did n't care to make the descent in the dark so I gave it up, consoling myself with that beguiling word "mañana." This becomes quite easy after you have lived in the country a while. As I returned, I saw below me on the trail what I took for a scarecrow in peones' clothing with a large white cloth attached and fluttering in the wind. I watched it a long time but it remained motionless; and I was surprised on coming near to find it was a live peon who had washed his handkerchief and was holding it in the wind to dry. How these people can keep so still is a mystery but they seem to find it easy enough. Morning or night is the same to them. How easy it is for a peon to get up in the morning! He picks up his bed which consists of a red blanket, swings it lightly about him, leans up against a wall, lights a cigarro and gazes complacently at the busy world.

Guanajuato's population is rated at from forty to fifty thousand. Its elevation is 6,800 feet. At the upper end of the city there are some beautiful residences and the city park adjoining la Presa is one of the best I have seen. The fine building-stone is quarried just back of

the city and is charming in color. Three shades were employed in the façade of the Juarez theater — gray, rose and a delicate green. In combination with the bronze ornament and figures, the effect is very pleasing. I was prepared to be disappointed in the theater but it is a superb edifice and its lines are restful to the eye. I never tire of looking at the exterior. Within all is profusion and lavishness of decoration. Every inch of wall space and ceiling is covered with raised ornament, Oriental in design and gorgeous in color. When the crimson velvet hangings, with their elaborate gold embroideries are in place, the effect is magnificent. The immense stage is provided with complete sets of every sort of scenery: there are winter and summer scenes, groves, lakes and Louis *seize* drawing-rooms. So well planned is the theater that street cars, laden with the company's trunks, etc., drive directly beneath the stage before unloading. The large foyer or, better, the drawing-room, is decorated in crimson, with a plain red carpet, red velvet hangings and furniture done in the same material, embroidered in real gold and with a heavy gold-bullion fringe. The appointments of this room alone are said to have cost thirty thousand dollars. The entire cost of the theater is reckoned at between seven and eight hundred thousand dollars. Considering its splendid construction, its wealth of ornament without and within, costly bronzes and marbles and elaborate furnishings, these figures do not seem unreasonable. I doubt if any city in the world can boast a more luxurious art temple than el Teatro Juarez.

An unfortunate contrast to the many attractive features of Guanajuato are the revolting spectacles presented by street beggars, who greet you at every turn. You are conscious, while admiring the theater perhaps,

of some crawling object beside you, and there is a loathesome creature, minus a hand, a leg or a foot, or possibly minus all three. The gulf separating this wretch from the opulence on every hand is appalling; and as I had come directly from Guadalajara, where such sights are not in evidence, I noticed it the more. How the Mexicans, who are naturally a kindly people, and above all lovers of the beautiful, can endure such horrors in their streets is a mystery. The conditions and customs that have led up to their apparent apathy are, perhaps, too numerous for a stranger to understand; but I hope it will not be many years before the people themselves will realize what a detraction it is from the beauty of their country, and provide a remedy.

Guanajuato impresses one as a busy place. All day you hear the clattering of the mule pack-trains over the stone pavements and every mule carries two sacks of ore. The sacks are usually of hide and look very durable. The trains are attended by more peones than I ever saw before; in fact there is one to every five mules, with a head man on horseback bringing up the rear.

Another extensive traffic is that of the water-carriers. Nearly all the drinking water is brought from springs in the mountains. At any hour of the day you meet the water men driving their burros loaded with large earthen jars of water. The price is three cents a jar. Peones also peddle drinking water about the city, carrying it in a sort of huge bottle made of clay. This is suspended from the head strap, and to fill a vessel, the vender merely ducks his head, and directs the stream with wonderful precision.

There are plenty of tequila saloons in the town and one that appears to be quite popular is at the corner of the cemetery wall of "La Compania," under the very

drippings of the sanctuary. The church is a massive old pile, always interesting but especially so at dusk, when the cedar trees loom, black as ink, at either side of the path, and the blackbirds, from all the country round, take up their lodging there for the night. Such a chattering and fluttering about as they settle themselves to their complete satisfaction! I went back again, when the moon was shining, and imagined the cedars looked blacker than ever for their legion of little night visitors. The streets were deserted and all was perfectly still; but suddenly some rude bird jostled his neighbor who told him to keep quiet. He replied that he guessed he had a right to shift from one foot to the other if he wanted to and the result was a squabble. A mischievous young bird in one of the top boughs yelled, "Come off the roost!" This roused the entire flock and in a minute they were all at it, chattering at the top of their lungs. It was funny to hear the racket gradually die away, as one by one they dropped off to sleep again, till at last all were still, save for two old lady birds who cheeped to each other in subdued tones, that the way some blackbirds carried on was a scandal and nothing less.

La Presa, the great dam of Guanajuato, impressed me as a stupendous achievement in the way of construction, and one that is proof against any and all emergencies. A former one gave way and many persons were drowned in the flood that resulted.

A place that I visited with more interest, was the historic Palacio de las Granaditas, which was once the storehouse for all the grains purchased by the crown. When Hidalgo marched from Dolores to Guanajuato, with his band of insurgents, the royalists took refuge with their families in this palace. It was stormed and taken by the revolutionists and history says the place ran rivers

of blood. When Hidalgo was finally made a prisoner at Chihuahua, and executed in company with his leaders, Allende and Jimenez, the heads were severed from the bodies and brought to Guanajuato, where they were suspended from the corners of the palace. The nails are still there and beneath them are tablets bearing the names of these heroes of independence. A plate near the entrance records the entrance of the revolutionary army and the capture of the palace on September 28, 1810: and another states that the edifice was begun in 1788 and completed in 1808 at a cost of $207,086.28. This minuteness as to detail indicates a remarkable accuracy on the part of governmental bookkeepers, during the time of construction.

On my last night in Guanajuato there was a special service in the great church of La Parroquia, and the place was ablaze with light and crowded to the doors. There was a fine orchestra and a good tenor voice and I stood outside a long time listening. The night was as bright as day and the people were flocking from all sides, to kneel and cross themselves before the entrance even if they could not find room inside. Among them I noticed an Indian, evidently a peon from the mines, in his scant cotton clothing and a ragged white zarape, which contrasted sharply with his dark and very remarkable face. He had the head of an artist, and his long, coal-black hair, not coarse like the average Indian's, but fine as a European's, heightened the effect. His finely chiseled features were rather Grecian than otherwise, and his face, as he stood gazing into the church, had that singularly unimpassioned look — shall I call it pure? that we see in ascetics and sometimes in men who work hard and live frugally. At last he fell on his knees, crossed himself with lightning rapidity, and then rising

and muffling his chin in his zarape went and leaned against the churchyard wall.

I was curious to know what the fiesta was and besides I wanted to talk with him, so I went up and spoke to him. In an instant his hat was in his hand. I said "Cubrase Ud!" (Cover yourself!) and we entered upon the natural relations of a man who wants to ask questions, and another who is able and willing to answer them. He said it was the fiesta of Maria Santisima of Guanajuato and that it lasted nine days, during which all the people came to offer thanks for the kindnesses God had seen fit to bestow, and pray for their continuance. (Our Thanksgiving Day precisely, I thought, only it comes earlier and this poor fellow won't have either turkey or mince pie.) He worked in the mines, he said, and lived with his madre and little sisters, providing the necessities for the family. No, his house was not very far, a little near! making a comprehensive sweep with his arm, from which I understood, as well as though he had told me, that to reach his house he must cross and go far down the other side of that high mountain, that seemed to touch the sky. I fancied that, according to my standard, it might be a little far, but he appeared as unconcerned as though he had to go a few squares at most.

The speech of this Indian was clear and rapid and showed no mean order of intelligence. He and his people had talked pure Castellano all their lives, he said, but there still remained towns somewhat retired where the people spoke their native dialect. "When they come here, with their uncouth ways, we stand and look at them and that is all," he added. I asked him about his work and if there were many accidents. He said men were often hurt but seldom killed. I told him of some of the things that happened in other countries; but while

he was interested, he insisted that there could be no caves in his mine; the ground was too hard. Indeed this is true of most Mexican mines. Then he tried to remember a story his father had told him about a great mine once being suddenly flooded and many, many people drowned, more than a thousand he believed. It was long ago, and nothing of the sort had ever happened since; but mass was still said in his barrio for the repose of their souls. Then saying, "Sir, I retire!" he lifted his hat, gave me his hand and was gone. An hour after, I fancied him crossing the top of the ridge in the moonlight; but I dare say at that moment he was curled up under the white zarape, in his hut at the foot of the mountain, the hut that sheltered his mother and little sisters. Only a peon! "But for a' that,— an' for a' that,— a man 's a man for a' that."

CHAPTER VIII

Busy Leon: Pleasant Visit at the Home of Don Juan: Golden Days in Lagos: Aguascalientes the Land of Hot Waters, Genial Climate and Warm Hearts: Its Foreign Colony: Baths al Fresco: "Mochte": Barber's Versatility: An Antique Zarape: Puebla the City of Angels: Its Cathedral: Its Monuments: Birthday of Uncle Sam: Difficulties of English: Abundio.

AS the time for my visit to my friend Don Juan, who resided in Lagos, was drawing near, and I wished to spend a few hours in Leon, en route, I now returned to Silao, where I took the main line for Leon, arriving there the same afternoon. After securing lodgings at the hotel I went to call upon a friend I had made in Mexico City, who was one of Leon's leading lawyers. As my stay must necessarily be brief, and as he was occupied at the time of my arrival, he introduced me to a young nephew, who kindly offered to go about with me.

Leon is destined to become a large manufacturing city. My friend the lawyer once said, "We are not rich in Leon but we are all workers!" I saw few signs of extreme poverty, at least not the kind that begs; and judging from the fine residences, there must be plenty of wealth, but it is unostentatious wealth. There is an excellent street-car service in Leon, and its citizens seem to prefer this means of getting about to driving. I was impressed by the air of industry. It was late in the afternoon and the streets were full of people, carrying

their work to turn it in at the shops. There were men with huge bundles of rebozos on their backs and women with their arms full of shoes. Until recently, all the manufacturing had been given out as piece work and done by the people in their homes, the work being paid for on delivery. We visited the tanning establishment of La Hormiga (The Ant), whose monthly output was three thousand hides and six thousand skins. The other large factories were for hosiery, zarapes and hats, respectively. Leon has a large brickyard and there are extensive quarries near, which yield a fine stone for building and a beautiful quartz-like rock, almost a marble. There is an abundant water supply, derived from a large reservoir and also from artificial wells in the center of the city. The theater is one of the best I have seen and quite appropriate for a city of Leon's size. It is light and roomy, with wide aisles, and fitted with comfortable cane opera-chairs.

I learned of a novel method of "playing bear" (love-making) while in this progressive city. The lover boards a street car in the cool of the afternoon, making the circuit repeatedly, during which he passes his lady's dwelling. This way of doing it has distinct advantages. There is a "now you see him, now you don't" feature that must add to the zest of the lady's enjoyment, while the "bear" has the chance to see all the other girls.

The derivation of the phrase "playing bear" is amusing. The lover begins his attentions by following, at a discreet distance, the lady of his adoration, or by standing for hours before her dwelling. If his pretensions meet with favor he presents himself daily before her home; the regularity and duration of his vigil being accepted as an indication of his ardor and constancy. It may be months before he receives so much

as a word from the lady's lips, or in writing. Meantime his prolonged and patient waiting earns for him the appellation of "bear."

The evening I spent at the home of my lawyer-friend where I heard some of the musicians of the younger set and, as in all the cities I visited, their selections were good and remarkably well rendered. There were some beautiful voices and the playing was notably fine. I have concluded that Mexico's best music is confined to the homes or to small and select recitals. As my train left at an early hour, I said good-by to my host, not expecting to see him again, but he was at the train the following morning, riding a superb horse; out for a gallop before breakfast, he said.

I arrived at Lagos in the evening. True to his promise Don Juan met me at the station and after a short drive, we alighted before an open portal, and I saw the patio, with the lights shining on a thicket of roses and turning the climbing bougainvillæa into masses of pink flame, and heard my friend saying, "This is your house!" I shall not attempt to write of the manifold kindnesses and sweet attentions accorded the visitor in a Mexican home. Friendship with one member of the household means friendship with all, entailing the interchange of Christian names and all the kindly relations which that implies. A delightful compliment is paid a guest in dispensing with much of the accustomed ceremony. "Do what pleases you!" is the assurance he receives. When the hour came for retiring and the daughter of the house, a lovely little señorita of fifteen summers, gave me her hand and said with charming friendliness, "You know you are in your own house!" I vowed inwardly I had never heard a prettier or more gracious flattery.

Lagos possesses an ancient and luxurious swimming-bath, hidden away in an old garden, amid a tangle of orange and rose trees. The repository of the huge, rusty key, that opens the battered portals leading to the garden, is known only to a few. Don Juan was in the circle, however, and we sought the garden and were splashing in the pool, when the sun first struck the water. The oranges were hanging thick overhead and the smell of roses was in the air. Then we returned to the house for *almuerzo*. My friend's mother presided but took nothing herself. She had been to early service while the stars were still out, and had *desayuno* before we even awoke. Almuerzo is really an elaborate breakfast. There was a profusion of everything and much that was quite new to me. One thing I liked very much was a camote, deliciously prepared and served with thick cream. Then there were the best little tortillas, that kept coming on piping hot and were eaten with another cream, something like cheese. There is one woman in every well-organized kitchen who is called the *tortillera,* and whose business it is to provide these small, snowy, delectable wafers. I had never tasted such chocolate before. It was not so thick as they make it in Mexico, and far more delicious in flavor. Another drink, that I had for the first time in Lagos, was *colonche*. It is the juice of a special kind of cactus fruit, slightly fermented. My friends were lamenting that there was none of this fruit to be had, as colonche is a delicacy and they were anxious I should try it. They finally gave it up as hopeless, and naturally I was consumed with a thirst for colonche which was unexpectedly gratified. I had met once in Mexico City a little maiden-lady with silvery hair and a face like a cameo, who played the guitar delightfully. She lived in Lagos.

How she learned of my thirst is a mystery, but that day at dinner there was a large decanter of colonche, sent with her compliments. It looks much like currant wine and is the most delicious refreshment I have ever taken in Mexico. If the *pulque,* which Xochitl presented to old king Tecpancaltzin, impressed him as favorably, I don't blame him for adopting it as his favorite tipple.

Lagos has an abundance of crystal-clear water. It lies in the center of a level plain which once held countless lakes. Many have disappeared, but the whole territory seems underflowed by water and a well of a hundred feet invariably encounters it. There are some remarkable artificial wells quite near the city, in a tract that was once the bed of a lake. The soil, which carries a great deal of salt, produces excellent alfalfa and a thick, wiry grass which cattle like. At intervals are seen clumps of low bushes, called *jara* and a well, sunk at any of these points, results in a vigorous, unfailing flow of warm water. The wells are made by sinking an iron tube about five inches in diameter the required depth. There are some ten or eleven in all, less than a hundred feet deep, at a cost not exceeding eighty dollars each. The water registers about sixty-six Fahrenheit and is very soft and pleasant in taste. The ground throughout this section is fertile, and the people will tell you that if you break off a twig and put it in the earth it will grow. The trees are chiefly French elms, pepper trees and eucalyptus.

The farther north I traveled, the more freedom I observed in the intercourse of the young people, especially in the smaller cities, where the leading families are connected by long friendships and frequently by marriage. I saw this illustrated in Lagos. There were more pretty girls there proportionately than in any other

place I had visited, and they flocked together like a big family of sisters. Every evening a bevy of señoritas, accompanied by a chaperon and attended by their youthful admirers, assembled in the moonlit corridor for an impromptu musical. I never wearied of the quaint folk songs and *danzas,* sung by the fresh young voices to guitar and mandolin accompaniment.

I had now been away from Mexico City considerably over a month, and was beginning to long for the metropolis. I had still to visit the city of Aguascalientes, where I also had friends, and while I anticipated the pleasure of meeting them and seeing the city, my desire was strong to be in Mexico City, the center of life and activity in the republic. After a week of what I have always remembered as golden days in the home of Don Juan, I took leave of his gentle mother, and all that radiant circle of youthful dons and lovely señoritas, and went on to the city of Aguascalientes or Hot Waters.

A gentleman, who first visited Aguascalientes long before the day of railroads, had been telling me of his early experiences in that delightful old town, of his cordial reception at the hands of its people, the grand entertainments to which he was bidden at adjoining haciendas, and the lavish hospitality of his Mexican hosts. His reminiscences recalled the letters of Mme. Calderon de la Barca, who wrote so delightfully of her life in Mexico in the early '40's. Aguascalientes is still cordial to the stranger, but her cordiality is of a more discreet and thoughtful kind than it was in the halcyon days, when the Mexican don assumed that every traveler-guest was a gentleman and treated him accordingly. In Mexico to-day, as in other lands, suitable introductions alone assure an entrance into Mexican homes.

The foreign colony of Aguascalientes is very large

In a Mexican garden

and English is generally spoken by foreigners and Mexicans alike. I had the fortune to be put up at the Casino where I found pleasant reading- and writing-roooms, card-rooms, billiard and pool, excellent baths and a café. There were some hundred members in the club, one-third of whom were foreigners. That night my Mexican friends took me to visit some English friends of theirs, whom they described as *muy simpaticos* (very agreeable). These young men, who lived in bachelors' apartments, had one room devoted to athletic sports; and we found several fellows, gloves on, pummeling each other for dear life. After our arrival, there was a round between two young Mexicans, and then one of our hosts put on the gloves with a Mexican. Fencing was also on the cards, although there was none on this occasion. We adjourned to the sala for music and refreshments, and I took occasion to make some inquiries regarding the nationalities of the different gentlemen in the company. The following countries were represented in addition to Mexico: England, France, Germany, Canada and the United States.

I was convinced of the sincerity of the friendship between these young Mexicans and their friends, by an amusing conversation that passed between two of their number. One of the young dons, it seemed, was somewhat a Lothario, preferring to flit from flower to flower, or rather from window to window, instead of confining his amorous glances always to the same *balcon.* One of his Northern friends, a Canadian, twitted him on his inconstancy and then got off something like the following, to the great delight of the Mexicans. "If I had a novia (sweetheart), how constant I would be! Always sighing, every night, beneath her window!"

"Why have n't you one?" inquired the Mexican.

"Because I don't know how to 'play bear,'" replied his friend sadly.

"I will teach you, I will teach you!" said the young Mexican so earnestly, the genuineness of his offer was not to be doubted. Nor could any better proof be shown of disinterested friendship, than the willingness to initiate a foreigner into the methods of courtship employed in Mexico.

The warm baths, in which the place abounds, are near the station, although the most popular ones are at the end of the Alameda. I was glad to see free baths for both men and women and they seemed to be well patronized; but the Indians are strange creatures. Within a hundred yards of the depot and close to the tracks, were long, narrow ditches filled with this same warm water. Here scores of women and girls were bathing; there must have been between sixty and eighty in all, splashing and ducking in the muddy water, while the children tumbled about in shallow puddles caused by the overflow. All seemed utterly unconscious and I presume they liked it better than being shut inside four walls. Their clothing had been washed and spread on the grass to dry, and when an Indian woman dresses she does it so deftly, there is nothing immodest about it.

In every locality the people have some dish which is peculiarly their own. From the time I arrived in Queretaro I saw camotes in abundance, and wished more than once the hotels would serve them, instead of their incessant meat courses. They are really a sweet potato, and if well cooked, delicious. The camote dulce or preserve of Puebla is famous, and may be bought at the capital, but I never saw them there in any other form. Here the women boil the potatoes and mash them up in a small wooden bowl, adding milk to suit the taste of

the customer. I had boiled camotes with cream, when I was in Lagos, and liked them immensely. In Uruapan, the colored servant of a Southern gentleman recognized their kinship to the sweet potato, and fried them deliciously. At the hotel in Aguas, the Chinese cook prepared them the same way; and I was sad at the thought of all the time I had spent in Mexico without them.

I must not fail to speak of "Mochte." The proprietor calling him "Moctecuhzoma," but I compromised with "Mochte." Mochte was the small, fat Indian boy who made my bed, tucking the covers in religiously at the head and leaving them loose at the foot. Perhaps he thought I slept wrong-end-to: or more likely assumed that my feet were as indifferent to cold as his own, and that, like him, I wanted to be well muffled up about the head. Mochte had a thick, stubby foot, with toes that looked as though they could perform the function of fingers if necessary.

Why the barbers of Aguascalientes charge just half what they do in other places is a mystery, but such is the case. I was riding with my friend Don Alberto through one of the outer barrios and in passing a small barber-shop he said, "The barber-shops here charge three cents and do all this: they cut your hair, shave you, extract a tooth and apply leeches." I accepted this as a jest, but when I later patronized the best hairdresser in town and he asked the modest sum of twelve cents, I decided that after all my friend's statement was not so unreasonable.

I relapsed into my old ways in Aguas, that is I went in pursuit of a gorgeous zarape and landed the prize. I resolved, on beginning my journey, not to buy a single zarape; but this one was irresistible, a genuine Saltillo,

with greens, blues, reds and yellows, all faded and mellowed with age. The wearer went into a shop to buy cigarros and I hung around till he came out, and then inquired politely if he cared to sell his overcoat. Of course he did! Who ever saw a peon who would n't sell his zarape after the sun came out? The purchase involved a long walk in the wake of the peon and considerable talk as to price, but it resulted in his handing it over. He would get a new one, red and warm, for the sixth part of what he sold it for; and I was at last the happy possessor of a Saltillo zarape. And yet I was not happy. I had acquired, through the ignorance of the owner, property at less than its market-value. It is difficult to judge what the value of an antique zarape is, but I felt sure this one would bring many times what I paid for it. And with the thoughtless greed of the trader I had offered the peon less than he asked. While I make no pretense to extraordinary fairness in trade, I have never experienced satisfaction, the excitement once passed, in having gained unreasonable advantage. On my next visit to the mines of my friend, Don Alfredo, I presented the zarape to Doña Marciana, who hung it up as a window-curtain. I discovered then that even a votive-offering does not atone for unscrupulous possessing.

I fear that I disappointed my Aguascalientes friends. They were constant in their attentions, and again I was bidden to their homes where I received the same kind and sincere welcome. My desire to be again in Mexico City increased; and while as in all great cities there is a hardness to surface-life in Mexico, there are also the brilliant accompaniments of hardness that attract. Then, too, my friends' vacations were nearly over, and they would shortly return to the capital. So it was with

The convent

In a convent garden, Puebla

the prospect of an early meeting that we said, "Hasta luego!" and I took train for Mexico City.

Ralph Waldo Emerson said, in effect, that the traveler, journey where he will, carries his personal worries with him. This I proved on returning to Mexico. An uneasy, restless spirit possessed me, and, worst of all, I failed in my endeavor to analyze it. A Spanish philosopher has said, "There is a remedy for everything but death!" I felt there was a cure for my restlessness if I could only discover it. As it was, a week in the capital was enough. The rains persisted, and the daily appearance, every afternoon, of dark, forbidding storm-clouds, with the close, oppressive air that in Mexico precedes the storm, proved unutterably depressing. At night the air, which was still sultry, was charged with a peculiar odor, suggesting salt-marsh; and as none of my friends could account for it, they all assumed that it was both noxious and deadly. To add to the festive conditions extant in the capital, the drainage-works were then in course of construction; and it seemed not unlikely the unwholesome smells emanated from there.

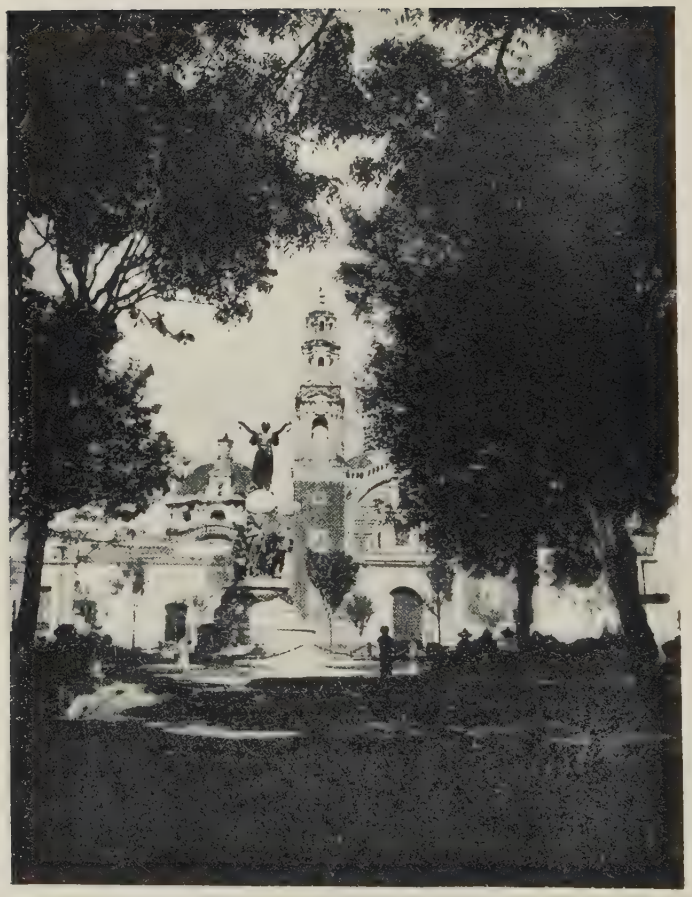
My friends, observing my unrest, recommended a visit to Puebla; and with slight urging from them, I set out for the "City of the Angels," with the added anticipation of seeing the pretty town of Jalapa, which enjoys a more mundane celebrity for the beauty of its women.

Puebla is well-named "City of the Angels." It proved little short of Heaven after la capital, with its heat, dust and drainage ŏdors. I found that the salt-marsh odor, which had permeated Mexico City at night, was not pernicious, as I had feared. We had it for fully half an hour on the train after leaving, in crossing the flats which are full of alkali. I had a feeling of

being near the sea. The ride to Puebla by day is charming. At Texcoco the salt smell changes for the scent of flowers, and from there on the air is sweet. At Mazapa, where there is a big hacienda, I got the pungent, resinous smell of pine, and then I saw that the hacienda advertises pine timber. Otumba, which I always associate with battles (Cortés had a tremendous fight there) looked peaceful enough. I saw several people embracing but no signs of fighting.

Puebla's population is 95,000. The city impresses you at once with its cleanliness. You have the feeling of being high up (it is nearly as high as Mexico City) and also a feeling that you are not shut in. This is partly due to the outlook, which is unconfined save for low hills; yet there is a buoyancy, a freedom from oppression in the atmosphere that adds to the feeling.

The churches are gorgeous. I did not appreciate the cathedral at first and I doubt whether it is possible to appreciate so stupendous an edifice on short acquaintance. I had to grow to like Mexico's cathedral, while some of the smaller churches pleased me at once. The only cathedral that held me from the first was Morelia's. There is an enchanting quality, a lightness, a grace of outline, that captivate the beholder. I ended by enjoying Puebla's cathedral. The rains had washed the marble figures of the saints snow-white, and made the gray building-stone more somber. I place a great deal of importance on color in buildings and their surroundings. In this connection, I fancy cloudy skies and dull gray days suit this cathedral better than the golden light and the bright blue heavens that seem the fitting environment for Morelia's. I never realized until now how I had unconsciously allowed these great churches to make for me the atmosphere of their respective cities. Mexico's



Monument of Independence, Puebla

cathedral is big, massive, commanding; generous and spreading, rather than towering in its proportions. That of Morelia has something fairy-like about it; its romantic beauty seems to dominate the half-tropical city, with its silent houses, sleeping gardens, and air of mysterious repose. Puebla's cathedral is cold, severe, magnificent. It towers to Heaven. While Mexico's cathedral bells make a deafening tumult, cheery withal, and Morelia's bells are silver chimes, the bells of Puebla's great temple are deep-toned, solemn, austere. The city itself is dignified. The people have an air of quiet composure and there is little evidence of frivolity.

The hospital of Puebla is an enormous and very splendid structure, filling the whole of one square, north, east, south and west. The entrance is adorned with a row of superb columns, and the front of the central or main portion is entirely of red, yellow and black bricks, disposed in an agreeable design and making a fine color effect. The other edifice of first importance is the Palacio Municipal, an elaborate structure of gray stone, fronting on the plaza. Puebla's houses are famous for their tiles, which give a picturesque variety of color, peculiar to this city alone, I believe. Often the fronts are of bright glazed tiles, with overhanging cornices of stone, elaborately carved and painted. You get the impression that the old residents were magnificent in their tastes; though such profuseness of ornament in building could only have prevailed where labor cost little. Many of the houses, where not of tiles, are painted in delicate colors. I saw one which was a fine old rose, with its wide, richly carved cornice and balconies painted white. The balconies were filled with geraniums which made a blaze of color. The effect was charming. As in Mexico, many of the churches are hidden by other more

recent buildings. Across the stretch of some uninteresting roof, you get glimpses of fine bits of carving, the best part being effectually hidden. There are, too, many unfinished churches, though I never object to one tower being left incomplete.

On approaching Puebla from Mexico you have a fine view of the great pyramid of Cholula, crowned by the little church of Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, whose graceful lines and slender towers are well-known from photographs. It is hard to realize that the hill is artificial, it is so covered with vegetation; and harder still to substitute in the mind's eye, for the pure white church, the frowning walls of the old temple, dedicated to heathen rites and sacrifice. It is hard to realize that, at the coming of the Spaniards, where Puebla stands there was nothing; while quaint Cholula, now the merest pueblo, was then a great Indian city, a city of temples, the Mecca of the Indian empire. The ride from Puebla to Cholula is a matter of thirty minutes, but the contrast is that of an old, retired village as opposed to a proud and opulent city. The houses of Cholula are generally one story and the churches are plain in construction. The people as a rule are Indian in type, but thrifty and neat; and the town has a comfortable air, the plaza especially being attractive and well kept. The old church of San Andres, outside the town, is a venerable, moss-grown pile, and in it there is a quaintly carved confessional. The legend goes that in it a priest was murdered; and to this day you can see the blood stains on the rawhide covering.

Puebla has a fine *paseo* or *alameda* with two splendid monuments. There is nothing better in Mexico, unless it be the Cuauhtemoc statue which would be remarkable anywhere. One of these is to Nicolas Bravo. A plain

shaft of gray stone rises from the pedestal, with the figure of the hero in bronze, in general's uniform, and the angel of victory descending to crown him with laurel. The other, which is very large, is dedicated to "Los Heroes de la Independencia." The shaft is marble. The figures clustered about it, which are bronze, are Hidalgo, Iturbide, Morelos, Allende and Aldama. Then there is Pipila, with the great stone on his back, with which he battered in the doors of the royalist stronghold at Guanajuato, another peon with a torch, and the drummer boy, who peers up into Hidalgo's face while he beats the peal "to arms." The old paseo, which has magnificent trees, is now deserted, save by the common people.

In the morning I went up to the hotel roof to view the city. I found a nice old lady up there, doing some odd chores, and she gladly showed me the various points of interest. She said she was born in the year of "the big cholera." I don't know just when that was, but I think early in the thirties. She told me the names of all the churches in Puebla, and she knew them by their towers. Then she showed me the forts of Loreto and Guadalupe of Cinco de Mayo fame, and told me how, after the fighting, she saw the dead soldiers lying under the portales. *Pobrecitos* (poor things) she called them. She told me about the soldiers Americanos coming, too, and declared that some of the charro horsemen cast their reatas at them, and dragged them from the saddle. They, too, were *pobrecitos,* as, in fact, were all who were killed, whether friend or foe. While listening to her, I was reminded that it was my country's birthday, seeing the stars and stripes floating from a housetop; and I was curious to see if she knew the flag. She said she was not sure, but she thought it was the Spanish

flag: that some one was celebrating a *dia santo*. "Perhaps it is Tio Samuel (Uncle Samuel)," I suggested. She looked a little mystified and said, "Perhaps."

As yet I had not seen the volcanoes for the clouds; but Abundio, the mozo in charge of my room, said at 5 A. M. they were *resplandecientes,* (resplendent) and volunteered to call me. I guessed that Abundio was from Oaxaca, and this gratified him so that he gave me a short history of himself. He is a Mixteco, and extremely warlike in his inclinations. He says his pueblo was continually in war with the adjoining one. He is n't quite sure whether he ever killed a man or not; but after a fight, there would frequently be ten to a dozen dead. He said the Oaxaqueños are the bravest *Indios* in the republic, that they can live on little or nothing, even go two days without food; and that they can run up the steep hills and rocks like deer. He said he would not care to be a regular soldier, whom he contemptuously called a slave, but he thought it was good to fight for pure liking. He liked geography and seemed to have a general idea of the old world countries, asking whether Russia was as large as Estados Unidos. He was going to work till he had saved a hundred dollars. Then he would buy some good books, "with which one could civilize himself somewhat," and retire to his pueblo to study. Abundio assured me that all the most powerful men come from his state; and gave me a long list of names, beginning naturally with Don Porfirio Diaz, and also accounts of several battles in which he was the hero. I asked Abundio for fun if he had n't some Spanish blood. He shook his finger and said, "Not one drop." This was quite evident. He had a mat of coarse black hair, rather small, snapping

Church of Our Lady de los Remedios, on the great pyramid of Cholula

eyes, and his face was very dark, but bright and vivacious.

While in Puebla I had a pleasant morning with the good priest in charge of the ancient convent "El Carmen." I found him entertaining a brother-priest, and together we wandered through the interminable corridors of the old convent, founded by the early Spaniards over three centuries ago, with the massive, carved arches, tiled stairways, and dilapidated but priceless paintings on the walls of the patios, where the sunlight reveals the wonderful colors, and in dark recesses, where they are scarcely visible. The convent is now a home for poor boys, and as there were no classes, the youngsters were busy making toy balloons of colored tissue paper, which the padre said delighted them above all other amusements.

As we strolled about, we compared adventures and impressions in traveling through the republic. The padre had traveled much in various parts and on various missions. He told of a long journey in the State of Michoacan, where they entered pueblos in which the Indians neither spoke a word of Spanish nor wore any clothing, other than the primitive cape of palm leaves. In one village, the people cried when they saw them, "Here come the revolutionists," and ran to get their machetes. On learning their mission, they cast themselves on the ground, face down, and begged their benediction. They then did everything they could for their comfort, bringing them a hot drink of chocolate and ground melon seeds, their one article of food at that season. How little we know, in our railway travels, of the primitive peoples in Mexico!

This was the pleasantest experience of my visit to

Puebla, and I think the padres enjoyed it as well. I am sure that no thought of creed entered anybody's mind. I knew them for good, devoted men, and they knew me for a fellow man.

It had rained the best part of the time while I was in Puebla. The city takes care of the water in the streets better than any other in the republic. Although apparently level, there is still grade enough to keep the water moving; and wherever two streets come together, there is a box-like gutter of masonry, directly in the middle, which collects the flood and conveys it past the crossing. The gutters are spanned by little stone bridges, which are patronized by the *gente decente* (decent people); the common people, usually barefooted, seeming to prefer splashing through the muddy stream. Constant rain in a big city becomes very monotonous, and I was looking forward with joy to Jalapa, with its balmy air, wealth of flowers and various tropical beauties.

Bird's-eye view of Puebla, Mexico

CHAPTER IX

Fair Jalapa: New Scenes and Customs: A Strange Plant: The Stone Monkey: The Cathedral: The Market: The Plaza: Longing for Old Friends: Ancient Tlaxcala: Historical Reminiscence: Convent of San Francisco: Meeting the Governor: El Santuario: Romance and Tragedy.

I DEPARTED from Puebla in the morning. The first part of the journey lay across a level and fertile country, which ascends gradually, past the old Spanish fortress at Perote, to the summit at the extremity of the tableland, where the altitude is over nine thousand feet. From there the descent into the hot country is rapid and the scenery is very beautiful. I arrived at Jalapa, which lies midway between the tableland and the coast, in the early afternoon. At first sight I thought, "It is like Uruapan!" I took the open car, drawn by a six-mule team, and we started for *el centro*. The mules were buckskins, with the black stripe along the backbone and the zebra markings, that mean good breed; and they were as alike as six peas in a pod. They carried us at a spanking trot, up a long, narrow, cobble-paved street, between neat, one-story tiled houses, with wide, overhanging eaves common to the hot country. At the end of the street is a sharp ascent. The driver whistled and rattled the brake, the six buckskins tugged at their collars, there was a hurried scramble of hoofs on the cobbles, and we were at the top, trotting past the plaza with its palms, evergreens and briar-rose hedges, into the center of the

town, where the old Cathedral looks across a smaller plaza at el Palacio Municipal, with the comfortable hotel and the wide portales filling the farther end of the square. On strolling to the plaza after dinner I was unprepared for the magnificent scene that met my eyes. The plaza crowns the hill, and from it you look off, over the lower portion of the city, across a broad stretch of country to the distant mountains. It being then the rainy season, they were partly hidden by the mists, which rested on their peaks, filled the cañons, and floated before them, revealing illusive, sunlit vistas. What they must be on a clear day, with Orizaba lifting his white crest eighteen thousand feet into the blue, I could but partly conceive. Throughout my stay, I had not so much as a peep at the ancient monarch, and with Mrs. Hudson's charming legend fresh in mind, I fancied him, in his annual mourning period, when he wraps himself, head and all, in his cloud-blanket and refuses to look upon his people.

Jalapa's plaza is a terrace garden, beautiful with flowers and crystal fountains; but when you tire of all these, there are the mountains to look upon. You leave the place reluctantly, looking back, and resolve that next time you will devote yourself to the garden. I went the next morning determined to see nothing but the flowers, which were profuse and varied. The gardener said that March, April and May were the flower months. In addition to briar roses, which form the hedges, there were fuschias, hydrangeas, fleurs-de-lis, balsam, dahlias, marguerites, sweet william, larkspur, chrysanthemums, cadmus, canna, roses and lilies in variety, and many others that I did not know. There was one particularly gorgeous lily in the Spanish colors, crimson and gold; and a shrub, called *tulipan,* which bears both a single and

double flower of crimson, with yellow stamens. One has but one set of petals, with the yellow tuft in the center, while others, on the same tree, are as full as double poppies.

Jalapa is a clean city. It is built on a hill and drains naturally. I smelled no uncanny smells there. The fountains are especially attractive, being usually of blue and white tiles, spotless, and filled with clear, cool water. There is that pleasant monotony in the houses which is peculiar to the old cities, or the old parts of cities. I am sure the eye is oftener troubled by the glaring unrelation of adjoining houses, than by their sameness. In Jalapa there are whole squares of low, cool-looking houses, some light blue, others terra-cotta or white. The tile roofs have taken on a good color with age: the windows are protected by green or black bars, and through the Moorish grills at the entrances one gets a glimpse of flowering patios. All growing things flourish, there is such an abundance of water. In the outskirts of the city, many houses have extensive walled gardens, which are jungles of coffee shrubs and banana palms. As the roadways are built up, you look over the walls and down upon a tangled thicket of green. On every hand you hear running water, but so thick is the foliage, you seldom see it. Many of these walls are provided with a long, low bench on the street side; in fact there is every opportunity for resting, with comfortable seats lining the long front corridor of the palace and chairs under the portales, fronting the plaza. Nevertheless I was impressed by the vivacity and activity of the Jalapeños. They are quite different in this respect from any people I have met in my travels. The lower classes are notably decent and cleanly. They walk rapidly, with erect, graceful carriage, and collectively

they are a handsome people. I noticed more than usual in the poor people, that gentle, kindly expression that draws me to them: and if I spoke to them, their way of answering showed them as kindly as they looked.

The city has rather a cosmopolitan air and really is a center in a way. The foreigner attracts little attention, but meets everywhere with friendly treatment. One gets an idea of what is meant by *la franqueza de la costa* (the frankness of the coast). There is little begging and all the working-people have a comfortable look. This extends to the beasts. The mules are all sleek and lively, and I saw men leading burros with halters. This burro seems quite different from the one we see in Mexico City. He is quite a fiery little fellow, proud and quick-stepping, and looks as though he would bolt on provocation. Could anything be more different than the yoking and driving of oxen in Northern lands and in Mexico? Here the yoke is for the neck, and the oxen are guided by "Gee-haw, buck!" There, the yoke is for the horns, and the driver walks silently ahead, his goad resting lightly on the cross-bar between the heads of the oxen and the great brutes follow its slightest deviation.

Jalapa is lighted by electricity, as are the palace and various buildings. The Jalapa Electric Light and Power Co., which has its plant at the falls of Texolo, lights in addition to Jalapa, the adjacent towns of Coatepec, Xico and Teocelo, and several large haciendas, besides supplying power for factories and coffee mills. At Xico, about an hour's run from Jalapa, trains connect with the stage, which conveys passengers to la Cascada de Texolo one of the beauty spots thereabouts. Texolo, pronounced Tay-sho-lo, means "stone monkey." In a corn patch, at some little distance from the falls, there is a rock with the figure of a monkey carved on it.

The Indians that people the district say that when the fathers of their tribe settled there, they encountered the carving, left by a previous people. The older tribe, according to legends, was very extensive. Old Xico, whose site is now marked by a few ruined dwellings, is said to have been a large town. A plague destroyed the populace and the town gradually disappeared. An extensive area is thickly strewn with obsidian arrow fragments and pieces of pottery, and a number of stone idols have been discovered there.

The falls, which are magnificent, are in a deep gorge, where vegetation runs riot. There are beautiful wild flowers, among them orchids of a brilliant rose-pink, and the finest ferns I ever saw. The tree ferns are especially large and full and there is a finer variety, which hangs from the rocks in great clusters; also a species that I think is called elk-horn. The strangest plant is one with a feathery, fern-like foliage called *vergonzoso* which I take to mean, "the ashamed one." At the slightest touch, not only of a live body but of any foreign object, the leaves curl up tightly and remain closed — how long I cannot say. You touch the top of the plant and it shuts up, quick as a wink: you touch a lower branch, and presto! that has closed. If you grasp the stalk, the entire thing seems to go to sleep, all the little branches drooping, hanging limp and apparently lifeless. The flower is a little fuzzy tuft, pale pink. There is another plant, evidently of the same family, which has a yellow bloom. When there are no flowers, however, you cannot tell them apart except by their actions. He of the yellow flower is quite unabashed when you lay hold of him. He holds up his head in defiance, where his little pink sister droops with shame. My host did not know the name of this *bravo,* so we christened him

"sin verguenza" (without shame). In walking about you continually encounter one or the other, and you cannot resist touching every one, to see whether it is vergonzoso, or not. We learned later that the unashamed is called *sensitivo*. I picked some of each, and though the latter held out for some time, he eventually curled up as the other; so he is sensitive, if not supersensitive. Perhaps he is like the male of other species. If left alone, he eventually becomes a tree, resembling somewhat the pepper tree. As to vergonzoso, I cannot say. I should suppose each rebuff scared her out of fully a year's growth, and that, in this way, she would never reach maturity.

Two other plants, that we did not touch, are known as *mal hombre* (bad man) and *mala mujer* (bad woman). They have broad, flat leaves and are really nettles.

One thing reminded me of the North, even there. It was a beautiful creeper with a blue flower like our morning-glory. In the North, it is carefully tended and opens only for a few hours in the morning. Here it runs wild over everything, coffee plants, banana palms, fences and trees alike; leaping from one to another, trailing in streamers and deep festoons, and flaunting its exquisite azure flowers all day long, and all night, for aught I know.

I am reminded to speak of the birds. They are everywhere,— in cages, in the trees, in the city and out of it; and all sing, with full-throated, flute-like voices. I imagine the altitude, less than four thousand feet, is better for vocal organs than a higher one. In the mountains, at a height of eight to ten thousand feet, there are no song birds; at least where I have been. There are plenty of birds, but all have harsh, shrill cries. Even the cat-

On the Viga Canal

tle seem incapable of good hearty lowing, but bleat feebly as though they had weak lungs.

Every time I went on the streets I noticed things that are different from Mexico City. The women of the serving-class wear, many of them, what I should call for lack of a better name, a sort of scuff slipper which protects the toes and sole of the foot and is only kept in place by scuffing as they walk. It is unusual to see a slovenly house mozo. His clothes are all wash material and show that they are frequently laundered. The poorest evidently possess at least one change. As the servants here are more active, much more seems to be required of them. Our table-boy swept the corridor and did chamber work besides; and if one of the children cried while he was serving the table, he darted out to pacify it. Some of the Jalapa milkmen ride horses or mules, and carry four cans in straw pockets, slung fore and aft from the saddle. Púlque, which is brought from up above, is delivered on mule-back, in bottles held in two crates which hang one on each side of the mule, who wears a collar of bells, and seems proud of his profession. The cargadores are a fine, sturdy set, also comparatively clean, feet and all; and they bow to you on the slightest provocation. They are evidently a step towards the Veracruz cargador, who drinks *vino tinto* and banquets his cronies. I noticed that many peones smoked large, villainous-looking, black cigars. I never saw that but once in Mexico, and the smoker, I felt sure from his gloomy eye, was away from his own *tierra*. The street venders seldom cry their wares. At dusk, nimble fellows in spotless white, trot about carrying wooden trays with delicious, shiny loaves of bread; and the inevitable dulces and peanuts are sold on the curb.

The cathedral is an interesting old edifice, with one tower, generally rambling and picturesque, and little Moorish, grated windows, scattered here and there, and a clock which is lighted at night. I arrived in time for mass. The church was undergoing repairs, outside and in, and scaffolding and ladders were everywhere. The workmen evidently had orders to keep working, no matter what happened. Some six or eight were busily chipping stone-work inside, and the racket quite drowned the priest's intoning and the piping of the small organ. The boys' voices, however, rose above the din, and seemed unusually clear and sweet. At the elevation of the Host, two wheels, one on each side of the altar, all hung with bells, were whirled rapidly by altar boys, and rang musically. I never happened to see this before. As the mass proceeded, the Indian workmen gradually stopped work, and stood reverently attentive, all save one big fellow, who kept doggedly at it, pounding away with a small sledge-hammer. The mass ended and the people went out, but he seemed quite oblivious to all save the work in hand. A group of Italian laborers sat near me and they seemed serious and devout, though they paid slight attention to the usual forms.

The city market is a big, imposing structure, very plain, surrounded by broad corridors with fine arches, and with an entrance on each of its four sides, between rows of massive pillars. The rotunda has a fountain and stalls, which are not in use, the display all being in the outer corridors, which are really portales with shops and restaurants opening upon them. The favorite café which is always crowded to the door, is naturally *la Jalapeña,* which is presided over by a very pretty girl, with the customary rose tucked back of the ear. At one corner of the market there is a clump of wil-

lows, shading a stone fountain with a broad rim, just right for a seat, and there the people are lolling morning, noon and night. The night life of Jalapa is like that of Guadalajara, though possibly it keeps up till a later hour. Ladies promenade in groups, both with and without escorts; and on all sides you hear the sweet salutation, Adios! ending with the rising inflection, instead of dropping the voice, as in Mexico. I have noticed it too, in the suburbs of the capital. Perhaps it means more intimate relations among the residents. At night the moon broke through the clouds and favored us for quite an hour. The plaza was very animated, with groups of pretty girls and caballeros promenading, and children romping. I think they were playing ring-around-the-rosy in Spanish.

The Alameda or Parque Hidalgo, in the older part of town, is a quaint place, circular, and surrounded by huge masonry benches, fully eighteen feet long, placed at intervals of six feet around the entire circle. Evidently when Jalapa is en fiesta she has crowds to take care of. The place seemed like a great amphitheater, with the trees sprung up inside and filling the arena. I am continually impressed by the remarkable building of the old Spaniards, from their greatest monuments to their smallest. These old benches are massive, dignified and finely proportioned.

I stayed a week in Jalapa. In the end, the lavish profuseness of nature and the constant rains became oppressive. There was too much of everything,—water, vegetation, flowers. I found it enervating in every way, yet could not make up my mind to leave. I sat outside the hotel a long time, trying to diagnose the unsatisfied, restless feeling that for weeks had troubled me. And I succeeded. I was homesick for the mines,— for my

good friends, Don Alfredo and Doña Marciana. I went to my room and began preparations for departure. I already felt better and began to whistle.

Before I left Mexico for Puebla, it had been planned that a friend who was leaving, a few days later, for Oaxaca, should join me in Jalapa; and that on our homeward journey, we should visit the ancient city of Tlaxcala, capital of the state of the same name, which adjoins the state of Puebla on the north. I was reluctant to abandon this visit, yet the failure of my friend to appear half-inclined me to do so. Then, too, the thought of a reunion with Don Alfredo and Doña Marciana was now transcending all other interests. I was still in doubt when I took the north-bound train. I had always been interested in Tlaxcala. History gives it a foremost place among the ancient Indian nations, and it occupies the unique one of never having yielded allegiance to the great Montezuma. Many and fierce were the battles between the heroic Tlaxcaltecas and the Mexicanos, who wished to subdue them. The former were always victorious, and the little State retained its independence, until the coming of the Spaniards. Tlaxcala was a republic. The people, generally supposed to have belonged, with the Aztecs, to the Nahuatl family, lived first on the shores of Lake Texcoco; but owing to quarrels with the Aztecs and other neighboring kingdoms, they migrated to the region now known as Tlaxcala, which is bounded by the states of Mexico, Puebla, Hidalgo and Veracruz. There they became a hardy, vigorous and independent people; repeatedly repelling the attacks of the other tribes, who frequently laid siege to their stronghold.

When Cortés reached the tableland, in his march to the capital of Montezuma, he found it desirable to pass

View east from Cortes's Palace, Cuernavaca, Mexico

through Tlaxcala; and he sent messengers to the capital, to ask the right of way. He met with a peremptory refusal, but he was determined to pass with or without permission, and the result was a number of bloody battles with the Tlaxcaltecas, in all of which the latter were defeated with heavy losses. A treaty of peace was at last effected, and the Spaniards, as friends and guests of the people, entered the city of Tlaxcala, which then occupied the hills above the site of the present town. They were met by multitudes at the gates of the city, who showered them with flowers and adorned their horses' necks with garlands. One historian says a hundred thousand people came out to meet them; and Cortés himself, in a letter to the emperor, compared the city with Granada, affirming that it was larger and more populous. It was divided into four quarters, separated one from the other by high stone walls, and governed respectively, each by its own chief or señor. The four chiefs were Maxixcatzin, Xicotencatl (the elder), Tlehuexolotzin and Citlalpopocatzin, and their names are inscribed on a tablet in the old convent as the first Tlaxcaltecas to receive Christian baptism. From that time until the conquest was completed, the Tlaxcaltecas were the faithful friends and allies of the Spaniards, together with the Cempoallans or Totonaca, the friendly Indians of Veracruz, who had aided Cortés in vanquishing those of Tlaxcala.

After the massacre of Cholula, when Cortés resumed his march to Mexico, and the Cempoallans abandoned him, fearful to trust themselves within the domains of Montezuma, the brave Tlaxcaltecas were steadfast and accompanied him to the Aztec capital. They shared with the Spaniards the horrors of the Noche Triste and all the hardships of that disastrous retreat; and far from

blaming them as the cause of their misfortunes, were stancher than ever in their devotion. They shared, too, in the victorious battle of Otumba, afterwards guiding the Spaniards back to Tlaxcala, where they were given a warm welcome and found friends to nurse them and heal their wounds; the chiefs assuring them that they and their people were their faithful allies till death. It was in Tlaxcala that thirteen brigantines were built under Martin Lopez, with the ready aid of Indian workmen; and these ships were carried over the mountains, piecemeal, on the backs of Indians, to the lake of Texcoco. The journey took four days and the escort was composed of twenty thousand Tlaxcalan warriors. In the final siege of the Aztec capital, the Tlaxcaltecas were the main support of Cortés; and a Tlaxcalan chief helped rescue the conqueror, when his horse was killed under him, and he was about to be carried off a prisoner. How any one could ever question the fidelity of the Indian as a friend, after these events, which are historical, I cannot understand.

When I reached Puebla, it was raining: in fact I had seen little else but rain for a week past. Whom should I run across in Puebla, but my friend Don Miguel, whom I had expected to meet at Jalapa but who had been held up five days by washouts down Oaxaca way. As I have said, our plans had included a trip to Tlaxcala, but I had given that up, being tired of prowling about alone. It is well enough in bright weather, but on rainy days I want a human companion.

"Shall we not go to Tlaxcala?" Don Miguel asked, after making it clear that *el agua* (the water) and not he was to blame for our tardy meeting. At the magic name "Tlaxcala" the day brightened visibly. My "Why not?" had such a taken-for-granted sound, I be-

gan to believe I had never really given up going. Our train left at 7:30 the following morning, and the day was gloomy enough, with rain imminent; but with a good companion, I forgot the weather. We had coffee at the station where the Chinese boys spoke neither English nor Spanish, a thing I often notice in the Mongolian in Mexico. These Chinese eating-houses invariably have good, hot soda-biscuit and the vilest coffee, with a strong savor of the ubiquitous cockroach. The ride from Puebla to Santa Ana Chiautempan, where we left the train for the street car, takes about an hour. I always feel, when I leave the railroad, I am getting closer to old Mexico. Railroads are fine things to take you comfortably near any given shrine, but for the last ten or twenty miles, give me a *diligencia* or at least a street car. At San Pablo Apetatitlan, a little pueblo we passed through, all was delightfully primitive; and in the quaint church, evidently very old, the bell was tolling mournfully, announcing a recent death in the village, and calling on the living to pray for the soul of the dead. The tolling is called *doblando,* and my companion admitted that while he knew it was practised of old, he had never heard it before. The bell was also tolled formerly when death was at hand. *Agonias* it was called, and it supplicated prayers for the dying. Both impressed me as solemn and beautiful.

As we left San Pablo, we caught a momentary glimpse of two beautiful towers, that just showed above the hills between us and Tlaxcala. A young charro said the church was El Santuario de Ocotlan, so-called from the appearance of the Virgin in a pine tree; from which the *ocote* (pitch-pine) is taken. We lost sight of them immediately, but this only added to our anticipation. The delight in approaching a town for the first time,

in this land where all towns have something of the picturesque and beautiful, is indescribable. Before we entered Tlaxcala, we passed innumerable abandoned houses of adobe fast going to ruin, which evidently once constituted an extensive suburban district. On reaching the town itself, we inquired for the best hotel, and were told there was but one, which simplified matters. My friend had assured me that we should call on Governor Cahuantzi, of whom I had heard much and whom I was anxious to meet. I reminded him that we had brought no letters, but he said that made no difference. "I am a Mexican," he said, "and you are a journalist. It is but right that we should pay our respects to the Governor." Almost immediately on our arrival, however, he encountered a good friend in an old resident of the town, and this gentleman offered to present us. We went at once to the palace, where he made an appointment for us to meet the Governor, and we then set out to see the city.

The palace is very large and very old, dating from the sixteenth century. Its dilapidated state had made repairs necessary, but thus far they had been unobtrusive. The exterior had been replastered and left in the natural color with no attempt at ornament, leaving the beautiful stone carving about the entrances, as it was left by the Spaniards. Inside, native workmen were frescoing the main hall after a quaint Indian fashion, with warriors in battle array, and the ancient deities of the nations; the effect being singularly pleasing. I wish more of the early life of the country might be embodied in modern decoration. Innumerable charming legends afford themes for series of wall-panels, that would make a theater or other public edifice wonderfully interesting.

Tower and cypress-trees

Tlaxcala's plaza is large and shaded by magnificent trees, with a profusion of the shrub known as *huele de noche,* which, as the name suggests, is fragrant at night. It bears fine, white flowers, and either by special dispensation, or on account of the rain which was already falling, it filled the air, though it was barely midday, with a strong, sweet aroma like magnolias. The parterres were all outlined by borders of black and white pebbles, worked into ornamental designs, both Grecian and Indian figures appearing. The walks were well kept, and the whole town impressed me as clean.

The first church we entered was that of the old convent of San Francisco. The ancient pile, largely in ruins, is on a low hill a little above the town. The buildings may well be called *antiquisimos,* as they were constructed shortly after the conquest, on the site of an Indian temple. Some of the walls of this temple still survive. An immense gateway leads into the convent inclosure. The bell tower stands alone, separated from the buildings, and some ominous crevices in the masonry suggest a general collapse at no distant day. A portion of the convent now serves as a *cuartel* and prison; but the church is preserved, being sustained by private subscription. The altars are very rich, though the carving is not so fine as in many of the old churches, and the paintings are dim with age and extremely interesting. I was impressed by the first one at the left on entering. It is entitled "Nuestra Señora de la Antigua." The Virgin and Child are in dark blue robes, covered with a small design in gold. The Virgin, whose face is very beautiful and dignified, holds a lily in her right hand; and two angels support a crown above her. In one of the chapels is the figure of the good San Benito de Palermo, ebony black and richly adorned. And this

reminds me that in some of the oldest, most isolated temples, I have seen images of the Christ, which if not black, were nearly so. A dark nut-brown comes nearer the color, perhaps. I remember one most remarkable, that had long black hair that hung below the middle of the figure. The most precious relics in San Francisco, however, are the first pulpit from which the Christian religion was preached in Mexico, and the font at which the four governors of the Indian republic were baptized. Both pulpit and font are of stone. Above the latter is a tablet, with the following inscription:

"En esta fuente recibieron la fe Catolica los cuatro senadores de la antigua Republica de Tlaxcala. El acto religioso tuvo lugar el año 1520, *siendo ministro Don Juan Diaz, Capellan del ejercito conquistador; y padrinos, el capitan, Don Hernan Cortés y sus distinguidos oficiales, Don Pedro de Alvarado, Don Andres de Tapia, Don Gonzalo de Sandoval, y Don Cristobal de Olid.*

"A Maxixcatzin, se le dió el nombre de Lorenzo, y á Xicohtencatl se le dió el nombre de Vicente, y á Clahuziolochi el de Gonzalo, y á Ziclapopocal el de Bartolomé."

"At this font received the Catholic faith the four senators of the ancient Tlaxcalan republic. The religious act took place the year 1520, the minister being Don Juan Diaz, chaplain of the conquering army, and the god-fathers, the captain, Don Hernan Cortés and his distinguished officers, Don Pedro de Alvarado, Don Andres de Tapia, Don Gonzalo de Sandoval, and Don Cristobal de Olid.

"To Maxixcatzin was given the name Lorenzo, and to Xicohtencatl was given the name Vincente, and to

Clahuziolochi that of Gonzalo, and to Ziclapopocal that of Bartolomé."

There seems a great difference in the spelling of Indian names by various writers. These are copied as they are inscribed on the tablet.

Before leaving this old church of San Francisco, I must speak of the wonderful arrangement of cedar cross-beams or girders, fashioned in a most beautiful and decorative way, and resisting the wear of more than three centuries.

From San Francisco, we went directly to the palace. We were conducted through a long suite of apartments and came finally to a handsomely furnished salon, which the Governor entered to receive us. Colonel Prospero Cahuantzi, Governor of Tlaxcala, claimed with pride that he was a direct descendant of the brave Tlaxcalteca race. Despite the fact that his sixty-seventh birthday was close at hand, he was apparently in the prime of life, showing the old time virility of his people. He gave us a cordial welcome, and my friend at once told him who we were, and what the object of our visit. At first the Governor spoke rather deprecatingly of Tlaxcala, saying it was little more than a rancho; but on finding that we were interested in the state and its history, he talked delightfully about it. His memory was remarkable and he had historical dates at his fingers' ends. He indicated where the ancient city had stood, and assured us that a portion of San Francisco's walls was really that of a Tlaxcalan temple. In connection with the first baptismal rites, he said that Otila, the daughter of Maxixcatzin, was actually baptized before the chiefs. This maiden had for a lover none other than the noble Cuauhtemoc. As Governor Cahuantzi expressed it, she was "Cuauhtemoc's novia." She was beautiful, and the

ardent young Velasquez de Leon fell in love with her at sight. "Neither knew a single word of the language of the other," said the governor, "nevertheless he began making her flowery speeches." The damsel's heart was won by the gallant young officer, and the latter lost no time in requesting Padre Olmeda to marry them.

"But, my son," said the padre, "it is impossible! You and this girl are of different races: you have not the same language: she is not even a Christian. Impossible!"

"Baptize her then and make her one!" said the fiery Velasquez de Leon. "Marry her I will!"

The idea of baptism was not unpleasant to the padre. Cortés was consulted and readily acceded. The troops were called out, there was a grand parade with martial salutes and music, and Otila was received into the Christian church with the new name Estefania, and sealed to Velasquez de Leon as his lawful wife.

Now comes the tragedy. On the Noche Triste, during that awful fight on the causeway of Tacuba, Cuauhtemoc, the betrayed lover, killed Velasquez de Leon with his own hand.

Governor Cahuantzi spoke fluently of the ancient language of Tlaxcala, which was the Mexicana. At a recent celebration of the anniversary of Cuauhtemoc, he delivered an address in the Mexican tongue. We had a very interesting half hour, and then bade him good-by reluctantly.

We had dinner at the restaurant under the portales with a small, active boy for waiter. Dinner over, we set out on a pilgrimage to el Santuario, whose towers we saw in approaching the town, and which stands on the hill above it. It is a beautiful church, snow white, with extremely graceful towers and ornate façade. I was

Ixtacalco

Churchyard gateway

disappointed to find the base of the ornament only was stone, with an application of something like staff to finish it. The image of the Virgin at the main altar is said to be very miraculous and the sacristy is lined with a series of elaborate paintings that impressed me slightly. We heard, later, that the best pictures were in another chapel, which we did not know existed, it being directly behind the main altar.

Tlaxcala has a museum, with a fine collection of idols and ancient relics of the Christian church. Among the latter are some splendid old chairs and vestments heavy with gold embroidery. An interesting exhibit are bow and arrows, with flint tips, said to be originals. We spent the rainy afternoon at the museum, and bade farewell to Tlaxcala in that gloomy half-light, well suited to conjuring up phantom cities and armies. I had saturated myself with Tlaxcalan history; the little town itself (it has only about three thousand souls) bore the stamp of antiquity, and on the long dark ride to the railroad, the deeds of the old conquerors and their allies, *los Tlaxcaltecas,* seemed very real and near.

CHAPTER X

The Fiesta of Covadonga: Gaiety of the Spaniard: His Mexican Cousin Helps Him Celebrate: Epifanio's Tip: His Version of the Spanish Conquest: The Eve of Mexican Independence: Quaint Folk Songs: Dancing in the Streets: Viva Mexico.

ON my arrival in Mexico City I was pleased to find there my young friend, Rafael de la G——, who had just returned from taking his post-graduate in Columbia University. I had always found his conversation interesting; and now he came, eager to tell me his impressions of my country, while I too had many pleasant things to relate about my life in Mexico. I also told him of my resolve to shortly undertake the journey into the Durango mountains to rejoin my friends in the mines. He heard my plans with the attentiveness that I always remarked in my Mexican friends; and while he sympathized with my state of mind, he advised me to remain a few weeks longer in the capital, if only to attend the Fiesta of Covadonga, which is annually celebrated by the Spanish Colony, and is essentially Spanish in character. To this proposal I gladly assented. The Spaniards in Mexico interested me exceedingly, although until now I had been impressed solely by their indefatigability in work and in business. Rafael assured me that the Spaniards entered into this Covadonga celebration, the only one they permitted themselves in a foreign land, with the same prodigious energy that characterized their business; and that it was the one

opportunity I should find in Mexico to appreciate the Spanish character. Further, he placed himself at my disposal on the day of the fiesta, promising to meet me in the early forenoon, and to see that I missed nothing from the beginning of the celebration.

The Fiesta of Covadonga fell early the following week. Rafael and I met, as agreed, and proceeded to the old church of Santo Domingo, in the plaza of that name, where it is believed the Aztecs first saw the promised sign of the eagle perched on the cactus, with the serpent in his talons. The church was richly hung with red and gold. High mass was celebrated, and for the first time I heard the Spanish national air. From Santo Domingo, we went direct to the Tivoli Eliseo.

I had attended other fiestas at the Tivoli Eliseo, occasions of discreet gaiety. People wore their best clothes, promenaded, showered each other with confetti, and waltzed a little in the pavilion. It was pretty but tiresome. Confetti-throwing is charming in theory but quite inane as a diversion. I had feared that spontaneous mirth, free and unrestrained, was over, at least where "grown-ups" were concerned. Then kind fate sent me to the Fiesta of Covadonga. There was little confetti-throwing. The Spaniard had come to dance. He had worked early and late for three hundred and sixty-four days, busily gathering *pesetas* in his adopted country. It may be doubted if he thought much of España. Early rising and the rush of trade are not conducive to reminiscence. But on the three hundred and sixty-fifth day he closes his shop and attends high mass at Santo Domingo. Then he puts on his rakish *boina,* takes a cup of cider with his cronies, and proceeds to dance with a gusto that is a revelation. I have always heard that the Spaniards and Irish are related. No

other people, except the sons of Erin, possess such an irrepressible flow of spirits. Indeed I saw many a smiling, good-natured face that might have hailed from the Emerald Isle. The favorite dance was the *jota,* performed by a lad and his novia or by two men, to the time of a quick waltz, and accompanied by castanets or the snapping of fingers. There was an abundance of music but even music was not indispensable. If a young *Gachupin* (Spaniard) and his chum felt like dancing between the numbers, they snapped their fingers merrily, and danced, without music. They seemed totally indifferent to observation. They danced because they enjoyed it and there was an end of it.

There were three military bands, several orchestras of stringed instruments and innumerable pipes, drums, mandolins and guitars. The local Mexican bands each formed a circle, with the maestro in the center surrounded by dancers. Among them was the famous "Artilleria," which has won fame in the United States. This band had just finished a piece, and the breathless dancers were rapturously shouting for *"otra,"* (another). In response they played a delightful waltz composed by one of their own number, with a refrain sung by the musicians:

Viva España valerosa,
Cuna de grandes proezas!
Viva Andalucia famosa,
Por sus valientes bellezas!

Long live brave Spain,
Cradle of heroic deeds!
And Andalucia,—
Famed for her valorous beauty!

Then the players shouted, "Ole! Viva España!" The dancers responded "Viva! Ole con Ole!" and danced more furiously. In the ring a charming child of nine or ten years danced with a boy somewhat older. There were several couples of young men and one who played a *panderete* or tambourine, with more skill than I have often seen on the minstrel stage, striking it with his elbow, head and heels almost simultaneously. Then he leaped into the midst of the circle and performed a wild dance that I never saw equaled for skill and grace. The lightest, most tireless dancers were the Aragonese. The Basques were a good second, and perhaps quite as indefatigable as the first, but less graceful. The men from different provinces could be distinguished by their dialects, Gallegan, Basque, Andalucian, Catalan,— or by some peculiarity of costume. All danced. One moment a group would be in full fling to the music of the pipes; the next, a band had struck up an inspiring jota in some other part of the grounds and they were off like a shot. The head man picks a place and shouts, "Aqui bailamos!" (We dance here!). He faces his partner and rattles his castanets. A space is cleared, and they are at it again, with all their might. As a rule they danced in couples, but one lad, who was the center of all eyes wherever he went, danced alone. He had a bright, jolly expression and wore a pongee blouse and dark blue boina. The minute the music ceased in one place, he darted away to another. I finally surprised him taking breath and praised his dancing, asking where he haled from. He replied from Asturia; that he had been all over Spain and Mexico and on the following day was off for los Estados Unidos. Meantime he was celebrating his feast-day having a good time. He was a handsome lad, not over sixteen, with an engaging smile and a dash of reck-

lessness that betrayed the adventurous spirit of the Spaniard. He was mopping his brow, when of a sudden a band began playing. "La jota!" he shouted and started off at a run. I did not see him again, but I fancied he would not lack friends among the Americanos.

As I addressed a remark in Spanish to Rafael, a hoarse voice close at my ear said, "All right!" It was a youthful Gachupin, who knew the Saxon twang, and was anxious to exhibit his own efficiency in English. He showed his delight at attracting my attention in a broad yet rather sheepish grin that made me laugh too. It was now growing dark and things were becoming livelier. Strings of brilliant lanterns were festooned from tree to tree and the white glare of the electric light fell in patches throughout the garden. What is there in the night that makes gaiety still gayer? It seemed the revelers had been peculiarly fit from the start; but now, if such a thing were possible, they became fitter. Perhaps *sidra* helped out more or less. It is a mildly fizzing beverage that I should call champagne-cider; and much less heady than the old time New England brew designated as "hard." Musicians and dancers alike seemed to have got their second wind and the scene became more and more animated. It was stirring — contagious! Here a couple danced beneath the trees, first in light, then in shadow. There a merry group whirled in the blaze of the arc-light. Now a crowd of breathless lads appeared in search of a new field. "Aqui bailamos!" and they were at it again. Wild applause came from the direction of the "banda de Artilleria" and we hurried to see what was up. It was the prettiest sight I had seen that day. A slip of a girl, in a clinging dress of some shimmering material — electric blue, I should say — with a long sash of crimson, a

The Discovery of Pulque

From a painting in the Academy of San Carlos

dark tam-o'-shanter tilted coquettishly over one ear, with her hair blown in ringlets that kept getting into her eyes and with a smile that got into the eyes of others, was dancing the jota with her novio. All I can tell about him is that he was dancing too. She was straight and slender as a reed and much more graceful. Her face was delicate and thoroughbred, with that alluring beauty, sometimes called *la beute de Diable*. Around her neck was a long string of crystal beads that had the effect of brilliants, with a tiny crimson fan dangling at the end. Her little high-heeled shoes were just visible as she danced. No wonder we applauded and cried, "Otra." The bandmaster made her a bow and a gallant speech. She flashed him a dazzling smile and the next moment he was back at his post with lifted baton. The music began and we had the dance over again. Then the novio led her away and the arc-light could not dissipate the gloom that settled upon us. She was our bright, particular star and we had lost her! All else seemed dross! Until we saw the Sevillana! She had the classic profile, the dark tresses, the glorious eyes of the Andalusian, and she wore the bewitching headdress of creamy lace, fastened with a blood-red rose. She danced, too, with a man. She made me think of the lines which I quoted, however imperfectly, for Rafael: —

> When you do dance —
> I wish you a wave of the sea,
> That you ever might do nothing but this.

It is fortunate that it is permissible to admire openly in Latin countries. If it were not, life in Mexico would not be worth living.

There was one clique composed entirely of Andalusians, and it was surrounded by an appreciative circle that

kept increasing, as the night wore on. There was a man who played the guitar magnificently, a handsome *Gitana* who sang the songs of Andalusia, and a second man who also sang, in the strangest, wheezing, rasping voice I ever heard, but as my friends expressed it *con mucha gracia*. Of all the quaint, weird songs, these were the quaintest and weirdest. In one, the man sang, "The dead-cart just passed by — and there, above the shroud, I saw a hand I knew." And the woman, singing to her man, "A life with thee is torture — Without thee, 'tis not life!" The people applauded rapturously. The songs were half-crooned, half-whined in a complaining, yet not unmusical tone, and brought a dim, evanescent impression of ways of living and thinking, unknown but fascinating. There was also a *torero,* who did a grotesque dance, going through remarkable contortions and making hideous grimaces. Taken in connection with the melancholy music, the night, the gaunt shadows cast by the trees and the circle of swarthy faces, the performance was gruesome and made one wonder where he really was. It created a burning desire to go to Andalusia.

Moreno pintan á Cristo:
Morena á la Magdalena:
Moreno es el bien que yo adoro:
Viva la gente morena.

A man sang this verse, leaning against a tree and gaily strumming a guitar. It was a tribute to the brunette or swarthy type. The substance of his ditty was that both Christ and the Magdalen were pictured as *morenos* (brunes): that it was the type he most adored, ending with "Viva the brown people!" Another refrain went: "Morena — Morena — Morena — tú quitas los rayos

Azucarilleros who sell tiny sugar figures for a few cents and play a tune for the buyer

del sol!" In other words, beauteous "morena" dims the rays of the sun.

All the beauty was not Andalusian. The eyes of the Mexican women are luminous as the Spanish, languid as the Oriental, with the added charm of *tristeza,* which, while purely hereditary and not indicative of character, is always interesting. On this occasion, las Mexicanas and their escorts contented themselves with promenading, waltzing or watching the antics of their livelier Spanish cousins, from the veranda of the casino. I presumed the Mexican youth was saving his strength and his lungs for "Viva México!" on the night of the wildly inspiring "*grito*" (cry) of independence.

One of the funniest experiences of the night was a talk with two members of the "Artilleria." At the close of a number, one of the players turned to me of his own accord, showed me the music, which contained the lines to España and Andalusia, and told me the piece was written by a young comrade. I construed it as a simple act of Mexican politeness, which I had come to accept as a matter of course; but I soon found that he knew my country. Another bright chap joined us, telling me they had played in Atlanta, St. Louis and Omaha and preserved pleasant memories of all. They liked American ways, and American girls were superlatively beautiful. The one failing of the latter seemed to be an inordinate desire for gold buttons, and the younger lad, who was a handsome fellow, said he should take an extra gross on his next visit. I asked the boy if he knew any English. After a modest disavowal, he finally admitted that sometimes, on bestowing buttons, he had conversed a little. It was hard work to make him tell what he said, but he finally imparted it in strictest confidence, which I am basely betraying. It was "Miss,

give me one kiss, please?" with the rising inflection on the "please."

As we strolled around for a last look at the Andalusian clique, whose fascination there was no resisting, I met a Mexican friend who exclaimed enthusiastically, "There is a country-woman of yours who is most beautiful," raising his hand to his lips in the manner of the country. He then took my arm and led me off to see her. When we found her she was standing on a chair, a vision of white, with a bunch of crimson roses at her throat, her fair young face flushed with excitement, as she looked on the strange scene. The funny bull-fighter was dancing again. He had pulled his hair over his eyes and put a handkerchief over his head, with his queer little pigtail sticking out at the back. He danced in a sitting position, with his body only a few inches above the ground, screwing his naturally comical face into contortions that convulsed his audience. At the close of his performance he said coolly, "I am going to breakfast," and took his departure. Rafael now asked if I wished to go home and looking at my watch, I saw both hands were at twelve. Even then we lingered: guitarras were purring, mandolinas tinkling, *castañuelas* clicking gaily, with the monotonous, unending sound of pipe and drum, and the orchestras in full swing. On every side, as far as we could see, were the trees bright with colored lights, and the people dancing beneath them; shouts of laughter, men's voices singing with the players, and "Ole, con ole, con ole!"

On our way home, I thanked Rafael for persuading me to stay over for the fiesta, assuring him that I should always remember it with satisfaction. He politely accepted my thanks, and added that he now hoped I would defer my journey until after Mexico's great celebration

on the sixteenth of September, which is the anniversary of Mexican Independence. He said that it was indispensable to a proper understanding of the Mexican public; and I realized that he was right, for the best time to know an individual or a people is undeniably the time of relaxation and pleasure. On inquiry I learned that the celebration really began the night of September fifteenth, when the President rang the historic bell and gave the grito or cry of independence from the balcony of the National Palace. After this, I was told, there were music and fireworks and then people went home. At the eleventh hour I was set right, where the going home was concerned, by a mysterious communication commonly known as a "tip."

I got the tip straight from Epifanio. Our relations had long been confidential,— in fact he was my secretario, though no one knew this but him and me. For the other boarders he was mozo, and general roustabout They called him "Pifa" and "tu." I always addressed him as Epifanio. We both felt that nicknames, as applied to a private secretary, were trifling and undignified — little short of *groserias*. Epifanio was queer-looking. He was short to begin with, and one leg was shorter than the other. He had the Indian's brown skin and a shock of hair like a doormat; but his shrewd face and energetic manner, above all his volubility, showed that he was not all Indian. He first interested me by telling me remarkable things about his home which is in the vicinity of Zacatecas, and making invidious remarks about la capital, which he said was ugly. According to Epifanio, la capital and his *tierra* were not to be named in the same day. If his accounts of the latter were true, it is little short of paradise. If not, he deserves the more credit for his inventive genius.

Epifanio asked me one day, in a confidential undertone, if I had ever heard of a man by the name of Hernan Cortés. He said he was an "individual" who came in a ship, quite a long time ago, and made war on the Aztecs. Finding that I was deeply interested to hear more, he proceeded to give me several verbatim conversations, which took place between Malinche (the Indian's name for Cortés) and the Aztec king. I suggested casually that I had heard the latter's name was Cuauhtemoctzin. Epifanio said "may be,"— but that he was not sure, so we let the matter drop. The main point was that Malinche made prisoners of the Indians, and treated them cruelly.

Epifanio added with some pride that there had once been a sort of play given in his tierra, depicting scenes from the conquest, in which he had assumed the character of Malinche. Naturally I wished to hear the verses, and after some persuasion, Epifanio took his position in the center of my room with a disreputable cap on the back of his head, ragged shirt and trousers that seemed struggling to part company, and wrecks of shoes, from which protruded numerous soiled toes; and in his decidedly musical voice, accompanied by furtive whiffs of mescal, recited a descriptive poem of the dream and vision of the princess Papantzin, in which she saw the white chief coming with his legions across the waters to take the realm and crown of her brother Montezuma and make him and his people the vassals of a strange king. The recital was attended with many graceful and expressive gestures, and much flourishing of a very greasy rag, which Epifanio employed ostensibly for cleaning purposes.

I expressed my appreciation of the performance in feeling terms, and at dinner he smuggled me a double

Two portraits of Epifanio—in working and gala array

portion of dulce in token of his esteem. That was the beginning of our intimacy. It was cemented by my taking his photograph. He made the request one morning, when he was looking more disreputable than usual, if such a thing were possible. He said his wife and children were still in the Zacatecas country, and he wished to send them a portrait. This gave me an inspiration, and, getting my kodak, I snapped him on the spot. Epifanio objected strongly: he wanted to change his attire, but I told him this preliminary shot was merely for practice. He then disappeared, and after some time presented himself in such gorgeous apparel, that I felt sure even his wife would not recognize him. He made a superb picture, however, and one was duly despatched in care of a certain comadre who was returning to his tierra. At the same time I have one taken au natural, which Epifanio has never seen and which I am sure he would not approve of. But to return to the tip. I received it on the day of the grito (September fifteenth) and this is what it was. Epifanio said the upper class labored under the delusion that the fun ended with the grito: that all that followed consisted in drunkards tramping and yelling through the street. He said that this was all a mistake and added mysteriously that the actual gaiety did n't begin until the strangers and sightseers had gone home.

The more I thought of Epifanio's statement, the greater became my curiosity. On this one night the peones are said to have license to do practically as they choose. They have certainly plenty to drink and alcohol brings out the worst side of a people. I wanted to see what that side was like. After one turn with a friend on San Francisco street, which was truly pandemonium, I went home and stayed until I felt satisfied the " gente

decente" had sought their houses. I then put on a thick coat and sallied forth. I had always liked Mexico's working classes, but what I saw from that time on till morning, "when the people were allowed to do as they pleased," made me like them more than ever.

It was two o'clock and a street dance was under way at the great arch at the head of Plateros. An obliging organ-grinder furnished the music and when he was tired the dancers took turns in grinding. Decent looking lads of the pueblo were waltzing with buxom maids: schoolboys with their arms about each other, were whirling like tops, and small, dirty ragamuffins were gliding, two and two, with a grace they must have imbibed with their mother's milk. Heaven alone knows how or where those imps learned to waltz, but waltz they did, with the swaying, undulating motion seen on the *zarzuela* stage.

In front of the portales and cathedral and surrounding the plaza, were the street kitchens with their flaring lights, surrounded by hungry revelers, attracted by savory but greasy odors. The prudent bodies were already flocking like chickens to their sleeping-places under the portales. There they huddled, five and six deep, all along the line, in front of the shops. I asked a comfortable looking ranchero, who with me was watching the small dancing dervishes, when and where the creatures would sleep. "Sleep!" he chuckled, "Daybreak will find them dancing in the streets!"

At this point, the ballroom was thrown into confusion by the appearance of a big-headed man who rushed in among the dancers and began delivering an oration. The delighted crowd closed in on him yelling "Viva Mexico!" They swept him off his feet and lifted him on their shoulders, where he kept on declaiming and wildly

Approach to Paseo de la Reforma, Mexico City

Street kitchens

waving hat and cane until gendarmes came running up and rescued him from his excited admirers.

On with the dance! The organ-grinder, who was trying to make his escape, was promptly rounded up: some one volunteered to grind and the ball proceeded. At my side a disheveled but cheerful female was reminding an older one how she danced a year ago. She commenced singing in a cracked voice and executed a few steps of el jarabe. What a miracle! A woman without a partner contentedly watching the sport of others and cheerful in remembering her own triumphs of last year!

Throughout the square the people were assembled in groups, each with its cluster of star performers. Music was always the attraction. Instruments and voices were often out of tune: a fine drizzle was falling and when there was an umbrella in the crowd it was held over the performers: but the audience was a grateful one and the singer seemed perfectly happy.

A man sat on a bench before the cathedral, strumming a guitar for the entertainment of a small circle. Two girls in black shawls came along unattended. They stopped before the player and one asked, "Would you like me to sing?" "Why not!" said the man. Without more ado she began singing, the man following her with his guitar. A girl of the street! Perhaps! This was what she sang:

Es el amor un sentimiento puro,
Que diviniza al alma y enoblece:
Es una flor que nace y solo crece,
En el arbol feraz del corazón,
El corazón es el jardin del alma;
Mas con llanto riega su recreo;
Cada lagrima ardiente es un deseo,
Que fecundisa este arbol del amor.

Love is a passion pure,
That blesses, ennobles the soul:
A flower that buds and blooms only
On the fruitful tree of the heart.
The heart is the garden of the soul,
Its blossoms are watered with tears:
Each passionate tear is a prayer,
That nurtures this tree of thy love.

On the plaza a crowd had gathered about a man who played the guitar superbly. He was a full-blooded Indian in white cotton clothing and sandals, and a master of his instrument — by far the best guitar player I had heard in the republic. If a fine face and dignified manner mean anything, the fellow had good blood in him, though he was a peon. I had seen more than one such in my wanderings, and I always said to myself, "Ah ha! here is a strain of Aztec blue-blood!" It had to go somewhere. It was not all spilled nor was it all merged into that of the conquering race. At the conclusion of a weird melody, a fair-skinned young fellow in eye-glasses, evidently a student, pushed his way through the crowd and offered to sing. The Indian bowed gravely and the lad struck at once into a gay danza. He had a sweet, clear tenor and seemed to feel sure of his accompanist. I doubt if the Indian had ever heard the song before, yet he played it delightfully, with that wonderful running melody in the bass, which is the acme of good guitar playing. The crowd applauded and an inebriated individual demanded, "Otra — otra!" "Take a seat," besought his female companion. The individual, who was quite unsteady, sank into a seat murmuring, "Music always enchants me!" The lad, gratified at his success, sang another and the Indian played it as perfectly as the first. It was natural and

refreshing. The boy had a good voice and loved to sing, the Indian played the guitar as few can and doubtless knew it. The boy's face showed plainly his gratification but the Indian made no sign.

It is interesting to note that Mexico's songs, even of the pueblo, have almost always a pure, often a beautiful sentiment. More, the people care quite as much for the verse as for the music. The country people have a sort of comic song called a *ranchera,* which is as popular there as are the negro songs in the North.

Four inebriates with their arms around each other, leaned up against a fountain basin, empty bottles in hand, and sang to a cross-looking female, who seemed trying to get them to go home. At first I could n't make out a word, but they liked the song, and no sooner was it ended, than they started it over again. At last I gathered the following:

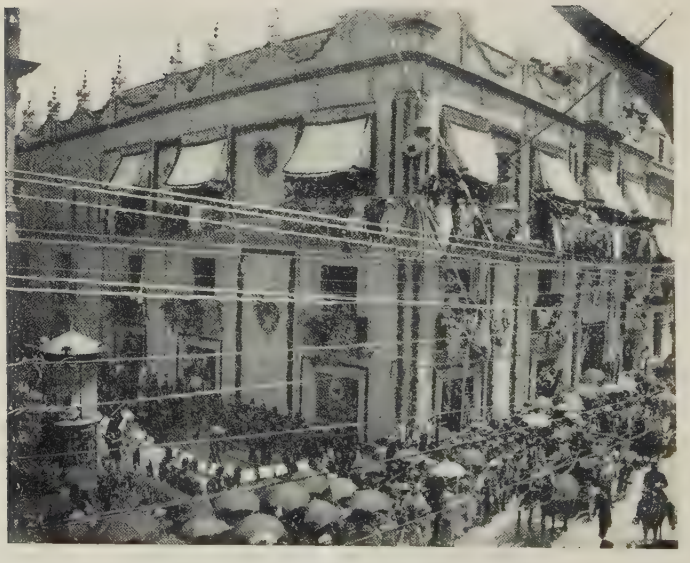
Marchita el alma, muerto el sentimiento,
Mustia la faz, helado el corazón;
Vagando siempre por camino incierto,
Sin la esperanza — sin la esperanza —
De alcanzar tu amor.
Yo quise hablarte, y decirte mucho — mucho —
Y al intentarlo, mi labio enmudeció.
Nada te dije porque nada pude,
Pues era de otro ya — pues era de otro ya — tu corazón.

Withered the soul — dead the sentiment —
Sad the face — frozen the heart —
Wandering always in uncertain paths,
Without the hope of gaining thy love,
I wished to speak with thee —
To tell thee much — much —
And in trying my lips were frozen:
I told thee nothing, for I could not,
It was another's already thy heart.

This was enough to melt any heart, but it seemed to have an irritating effect on the woman. Perhaps she did n't care for music! I was wondering which one of the four was the possessor of her affections, when she suddenly made a vicious grab for one of her wooers and with a few vigorous cuffs, started him off ahead of her. Evidently he was the lucky man. The others trailed along in the rear, " wandering always in uncertain paths."

All this time it was drizzling intermittently, yet every seat on the plaza was full. What impressed me was the universal good nature. I saw but one fight. It was between a coffee vender and a patron who paid a centavo for a cup of coffee, and then tried to make away with the cup. The owner called him a *sinverguenza* (without shame) and drew his knife, but his wife threw herself into the breach exclaiming, " *Que haces?* " (" What are you doing? ") and at this juncture the gendarmes arrived and carried off the cup-grabber. At the corner, however, they let him go, nor was this the only case of leniency I witnessed. A decent-looking young peon was arrested on the complaint of a girl of the middle lower-class, who claimed he had robbed her of a necklace of glass beads, breaking the string and snatching them from behind. The peon swore he was innocent, told where he worked, produced a huge key to prove that he had a roof to sleep under and declared that his wife was seated over there, under the portales, and that it was not convenient to leave her alone in such a crowd. I was for letting him go and I think the gendarme was; but the girl, while she did n't seem at all certain he was the man, insisted on his being taken to the station. " Bueno! " said the peon, and then performed a strategic master-stroke that gained him his freedom. Taking off his hat, he besought the girl to go and fetch his wife,

National palace, Mexico City



Jockey Club, Mexico City, during flower carnival

that he might give her the key to their tenement. His accuser hesitated.

"Poor thing!" said her companion. "Let us go!"

"Where?" asked the girl.

"Just there, under the portales," said the peon. With a bewildered look the girl started on her hopeless quest, prompted by sympathy for the luckless wife. The crowd surged in between. The gendarme relaxed his hold a bit, and his attention seemed drawn in another direction. The next minute the peon was gone.

"I could not find her," said the girl, returning in disgust. "Where is that man!"

"He escaped," said the gendarme.

At four A. M. it was still raining and the people were still dancing. The streets were covered with sticky slime an inch deep, but this did n't affect bare feet. The latter suffered more or less from broken glass, however. I saw a boy contentedly grinning at the dancers, while he held up one foot from which had dripped a small pool of blood. "A broken bottle, señor!" He seemed quite indifferent and I concluded sympathy was not in order. His complete disregard of the hurt struck me as a species of mind-cure. Peones' feet must have remarkably tough soles! In the circle about the bandstand another dance was under way, and the participants were nearly all barefooted; yet they danced furiously on the uneven and quite rocky ground and every time the organ-grinder tried to get away they surrounded him and pleaded for "just one more." His music, like all the rest, was a free contribution to the fiesta; and it showed a generous spirit in all those of his calling who carried their heavy instruments from place to place, and supplied dance-music free of charge.

I was still more impressed when a company of musi-

cians, members of a stringed orchestra returning from a ball probably, stopped in crossing the plaza, tuned their instruments as well as they could in the rain, and played the bewitching music of "Los Cocineros" for their offering. I imagine these bands gain a precarious livelihood. The members of this one were thinly clad for such weather and there was not a whole pair of shoes among them. They could n't have felt much like playing but they wanted to do their part. "Vivan los musicos!" shouted the crowd, "Otra! Otra! Vivan los musicos!"

At five o'clock the street kitchens were doing a thriving business. The more prosperous ones had canvas awnings and were provided with tables and wooden benches: but there were scores of Indian women out in the open, crouching on the wet cobblestones, before their small charcoal pots, cooking for clamorous multitudes. Everything seemed to be frying and the damp morning air was heavy with the fumes of sizzling fat. Music was still in demand and every kitchen had one or more obliging artists. Among them was a brawny cargador, who whistled through his fingers like a steam calliope, to the intense delight of a large audience. Most of these people had not slept a wink, yet all were eminently cheerful. A small proportion only showed the effects of over-imbibing. We are apt to be more impressed, however, by these, than by the masses of well-behaved people. The morning broke gray and dismal, and I began to have visions of a more comfortable place than the Plaza Mayor. Many others seemed of the same mind and were departing in groups to their homes in the suburbs. Nearly all were singing. As I passed the portales I took a last look at the sleeping multitude. I am sure there was not room for even one more. A

few of the vivacious ones were exchanging cigarros and gossip, but most of them were sleeping, some full-length on the hard pavement, others in a sitting posture, with their heads bowed between their knees, or with the shoulder of a friend for a pillow; the patient Mexican pueblo, which had been granted license for twelve hours, and took it out in singing, dancing and shouting, "Viva Mexico!"

CHAPTER XI

Anticipation: Pleasures of Mexico City: Second Visit to Durango: Over the Mountains With Manuel: A Rainy Day: The Voices of the Sea: Don Lucio: Snow, Sunshine and a Camp under the Pines: A Lonely Maid: Manuel's Diplomacy: Snow in the Mountains: Oranges Keep Cold: The Ideal Camp.

I HAD communicated my plan to revisit the mines to Don Alfredo and Doña Marciana, and had received from them a behest to rejoin them as soon as convenient, and an admonition to make the journey over the Durango mountains before the beginning of the winter rains. I had set my heart on passing the Christmas holidays at the mines; but it was still September, and with the holiday prospect in view, I lingered on in Mexico, enjoying the pleasures of the capital city.

November was already far advanced when I began to take seriously Don Alfredo's admonition to cross the mountains before the rains set in. I knew they were due any time in December, and I decided to start at once. I packed one of my horsehide trunks, wrote and posted a few home letters, passed the last afternoon in leave-takings, and in the early morning took train for Durango.

For me Durango will always be associated with the charm of surprise. From it I had my first revelation as to Mexico's cities. I learned then that it was one of the most primitive, or rather conservative, of all the cities. It was *Semana Santa* and the place was given over to the accustomed rites, which were attended with

much more austerity than in the capital; the penitential season being followed by a bull-fight, my first spectacle of *los toros*. I don't rail against bull-fights. I know centuries of custom are a powerful factor, not to be treated lightly. I simply keep away from them. The nearest approach to trouble I ever saw in the *casa de huespedes* where I lived in Mexico, was the result of my expressing my feelings on the subject, one day, when there were about thirty young Mexicans, with a sprinkling of Spaniards and Cubans in the dining-room. About half of them sided with me and the battle waged hot and heavy. They talked so fast, I could n't understand a word and I was relieved when there was a slight lull, resulting from lack of breath on the part of the combatants, and I was enabled to interpose a diversion in the shape of a gringo blunder regarding the sport, which raised a laugh.

When I was in Durango before, the beautiful plaza was ablaze with yellow roses and the seats all filled, at every hour in the day, with the people, mostly of the working class. There were few foreigners in evidence. Now I noticed a marked decrease in the peones and a corresponding increase in foreigners. I even saw some fair young country-women of mine sitting on the plaza reading, and the sight gladdened my eyes. Durango is the center of the mining district and the mine owners congregate there, along with a miscellaneous assortment of men who have been working in the mines and are waiting to go out; and of others who are seeking work and are waiting to go in.

Durango is a busy place, although one would not think so at first sight. The busy scenes are within the patios of the immense supply houses, where mozos are busy from morning till night, nailing and sewing up stores

for the various mining haciendas. Occasionally you will see a freighter with anywhere from fifty to eighty pack-mules, preparing for his long trip into the mountains. After much tugging and cinching on the part of the men, and much bucking and shying on the part of the mules, each beast is finally loaded with a pack weighing from eight to twelve *arrobas* (two hundred to three hundred pounds) and the long train winds out of the city and up the mountain, to begin a journey of two weeks or more. Twice I had been there in April, and found it ideal spring weather; and now in these first December days, the mornings and nights were like those of a sharp, Northern fall, with a midday like Indian summer.

The men of Durango, particularly of the working class, seem larger and of a more vigorous type than in the Southern cities. There is much beauty among the women, also of rather a distinctive order; in fact one could almost tell a Durango woman of the middle class, from a certain similarity of expression and the slow but musical, drawling accent. The cargadores who are always most prominent among the workers of a city are a brawny, stalwart set, eminently clean and decent in appearance. They nearly all wear heavy blue overalls and jumpers, with thick shoes and a shaggy, white felt hat which seems their special badge. Indeed, all the common people impressed me as a superior set, and a young man, a native of the capital, remarked the same thing in most forceful terms. In journeying towards the north, I missed more and more the cry of the street vender.

I made an early visit to my favorite Baños de las Canoas and had rather an extended talk with the owner, who treated me as an old and valued customer. I asked him if he was of Durango and he said he was not; but

that he had lived there forty years and felt he might reasonably claim it as his home. I asked him where his tierra was and after some meditation, he said that he grew up in San Luis, but that he was born at sea. His father was bringing his young mother from Spain and she died in giving him birth. This seemed to me very sad and I said as much. He meditated again and responded, "Well, yes," in a deprecatory tone, as though it had never occurred to him in that light. When he first came to Durango the chaparral covered the spot where the depot now stands. He approved of railroads and prophesied that when the lines were completed there would be an opening up of new mining properties that would astonish the natives. He assured me that Durango was very ancient: that it began as a rancho, followed by a hacienda and then the city: and that Torreon was nothing more than a cluster of huts forty years before.

Durango's cathedral is over three centuries old. The altars were originally of wood, but were renewed by the wealthy mine-owner, Zambrano, who was once proprietor of the famous "Mina Candelaria," now the property of a California company. Zambrano built a magnificent house in Durango, which is now a government building, and a theater for his own entertainment. It is said that on the occasion of a grand banquet and ball, he caused the patio of his house to be entirely relaid with silver bricks. The descendants of this mining prince reside in Spain.

Crossing the plaza one evening, I encountered an unexpected treat in the form of a serenata, by a fine string band. I was informed that it was a testimonial from some enamored swain to his sweetheart, and as a number of dark-eyed beauties were promenading, I speculated a good deal as to which might be the favored one. Sev-

eral young caballeros were seated in the shade of a rose arbor and I singled out one, who muffled his chin in his cape with unusual mystery, as probably being the lover. There was a fine band concert on Sunday night, and the manner of the paseo was the same as in other cities, the ladies walking together and the men in the opposite direction. I saw many lovely faces and many of the girls were without hats, though millinery was also affected by the upper class.

I had a great deal on my mind while I was in Durango — mountains in fact. Ever since I had looked on them, towering in the distance, they had seemed to say, "Come!" Among innumerable other things had been saddle horses, pack-mules and mozos. I presume I tried every horse for sale, within a radius of twenty kilometers; and every one had something the matter. If his wind was n't broken, he had a sore back, or was bad about the head and would n't take the bit. As soon as I found a horse that I felt a liking for, all the gentlemen at the hotel, horsemen every one of them, began telling me his bad points, and before they had finished I would n't have had him for a gift. It is no fun at this season, when the night winds are cold and snow may fall any time, to be caught in the mountains with a leg-weary horse, and have to dismount and drag him up the trail. So I decided to take a mule. A mule may be joggy but she always gets there. Manuel, my mozo, advised this from the start, and now that I acted on his advice, he was delighted. Manuel's chief anxiety seemed to relate to the *cocina* (kitchen) as he called our box of provisions. He suggested gordas and tamales, to which I acceded; and shortly after, he appeared with two women, each laden with immense baskets, one of which was filled with gordas and the other literally running over with

tamales. I tried one and found it good and Manuel said when they were hot they were much better. I asked him rather doubtfully if he thought we could eat all the gordas,— they looked enough for a regiment,— but Manuel said when he was on the trail, he could himself eat an *almud* of corn a day. He was a sturdy, lusty chap, light on his feet, and I fancied would be a good hand to keep the fire going at night and look out for the animals. He had a jolly face and I doubted not could sing. I like a singing mozo. When you are riding five days at a stretch with no other companion, it helps out amazingly.

On the night before our departure I experienced that sense of peace and contentment I had felt before, on the eve of a mountain journey. Now but a few hours intervened between me and the mountains, with their rugged heights; the dim woods and the silent places; sleeping under the stars by the camp-fire, and up and away at the crack of dawn. Long I gazed on them from the corridor of the hotel. A warm wind was blowing straight from the hills, and I fancied it brought the smell of pine woods and the chaparral. Manuel came to inquire at what time we should start, and signified his readiness to be on hand with the mules at 4 A. M. We compromised on six o'clock. The one thing I did not like was the sound of Manuel's feet on the stone floor of the corridor, as he came to bring some oranges I had sent him for. There was a halting, disconnected sort of flap to his sandals that made me look to see what was up; and I found he was stepping high and putting his feet down carefully, as though he were treading on eggs. Besides there was a fixed glare in his eye, that showed things had begun to go round, and that he found his only safety in putting his gaze on one object and

holding it there. I told him to call me at five o'clock sharp and that we would start at six; and then sent him away with some misgivings as to whether he would show up at all or not; but at five o'clock, while it was still pitch dark, there came a rap on my door and, "Here I am, señor!" Manuel had slept off his slight indisposition and was ready for business. From that time to the end of our journey he refused even a small *copita,* though I knew he was often tired and cold. He always said, "I don't know how to drink." I am convinced this was true and that one social cup with a friend the last night had gone to his feet.

When Manuel was roping the cargo on the mules I saw him give a short, searching glance at the sky. I noticed that it was rather leaden, but thought the sun would remedy that. I got on my mule and Manuel came and fixed the *rosaderas,* two long strips of bear-skin which hung from the pommel, covering my legs and feet and fastening back of the saddle. I felt like an infant being tied into a perambulator and the things struck me as absurd, but I was glad enough to have them ere the day was over. Before we got outside the city, a light, drizzling rain began falling; but I relied on the sunrise to set all right. The morning broke, cold and dismal, and the drizzle increased. Manuel said it would be worse in the mountains. The weather was not without its compensation, as the dampness brought out all the aromatic odors of grass and shrubs, making me breathe longer and deeper than I had for months. This action seems involuntary, as though the lungs had been craving sweet, pure air and were greedy to get their fill of it.

As we turned a bend in the trail, we came upon a young girl sitting on the ground, laughing at the top of her voice; while a peon and an older woman were

busily picking up some loose corn they had evidently upset. The girl called out, "Adios, señor!" and then "Where are you going?" I told her, at which she shouted, "Won't you take me?" "Yes! Why not? Come on!" I replied. At this she began screaming and laughing again and I heard her long after she was out of sight. By this time the drizzle had turned into a cold, soaking rain which was directly in our faces. The two women we had just passed were riding burros, and with no covering save their thin, cotton dresses, and pieces of white stuff that looked like coarse bagging. The peon was on foot, and they were bound for La Mina Trinidad, a good five days' journey, Manuel said.

As we crossed the first ridge, the rain and wind increased and there came a dull, sullen roar from the mountains. I looked at Manuel and asked what it was. There was a scared look on his face as he answered that it was the sea. He said it was *muy malo* (very bad), that it meant bad weather, with much rain and snow. It seemed incredible that it could really be the roar of the ocean, so far inland; but I have no other theory to offer, as it was neither thunder nor wind. We heard it several times and it sounded dreary enough. The only other human beings we saw were a peon and his woman, the latter mounted on a little burro which the peon was hurrying cityward; and a woman driving several animals loaded with firewood, which she had undoubtedly cut herself, as the ax was lashed to one of the cargoes. She was thinly clad and her bare feet projected from her ragged shoes as she trudged along in the storm. At two o'clock we reached the rancho, San José, an ordinary ride of three hours which had taken us seven; and as the rain showed no sign of holding up, I decided to stay there for the night. There was

no other house we could possibly make and Don Lucio, the *caporal,* kindly opened a room in the owner's cottage, where I could be very comfortable. While Manuel made a fire before the door and got dinner, Don Lucio came in and sat with me. He was a short, fat, little man, about fifty years old, in a leather charro suit and a big hat. He had never been farther than the city of Durango in his life; and he combined the native dignity and courtesy of his race with the simplicity of a child. He inquired ingenuously if I had a *traguito* (a little drink) and some cigarros; and these being forthcoming, he seated himself on my trunk and relapsed into mute admiration for my various belongings, broken only when something elicited a "Que bonito!" (How fine!) or a "Que chistoso!" (How funny!) Don Lucio admired my blankets, doted on my revolver and chuckled over my woolen gloves, which he said were very big and hairy like bear's paws. Don Lucio's delight was so spontaneous I didn't even trouble to say, "At your orders." He didn't want my gloves, I hadn't the least idea of giving them to him, and I considered idle compliments a waste of breath.

Don Lucio stayed to dinner and he also dropped around for supper. After the latter feast, he braced himself, cleared his throat and said he wished with my permission, to ask me something. I supposed it would be, at the very least, a request for a donation of coffee, which, in the mountains, is valued above almost any other beverage, unless it be tequila. Now hear how I misjudged Don Lucio! He gazed at me earnestly for a moment and then asked if I had ever seen a people called the Chinese. I said that I had. He eyed me again as though making sure that I was telling him the truth and then went on. He had heard there was an-

other people uglier still than the Chinese and black — black, who wore little or no clothing and were bought and sold like beasts, and he wanted to know if it was true. I felt that I was on my honor and returned Don Lucio's gaze as steadfastly as the occasion would permit, as I replied that there was such a people, that they were still bought and sold in some countries, and that in their own tierra they wore no clothes at all. Don Lucio drew his zarape about him with an air of offended modesty and asked if their tierra was near there. In vain I cast about for some means of enlightening Don Lucio as to the dark continent. I started to compare it with South America, but found that would n't go. Then I told him it was many times larger than Mexico but Don Lucio only stared. At last I told him it was a big country over the sea and we let it go at that.

When Don Lucio told me he had never seen the President's portrait and asked me if he was fine looking, I felt that my duty was plain. I had a portrait of President Diaz in my trunk, and I soon had the ropes untied and Don Lucio was gazing in rapture on the face of his President. He exclaimed, "How tall! How powerful!" admired each individual medal on the front of the General's uniform and added solemnly, "It is he who commands everything." The chickens were going to roost on the trees near the door and Don Lucio said, "May you pass a good night!" and retired, literally too full for further utterance.

"Early to bed and early to rise" is a safe motto for mountain travel. While Don Lucio was admiring the photograph, Manuel had made my bed, which he announced was ready and requested me to lie down saying, "I will cover you up afterwards, señor." I started to draw off my boots but Manuel flew at me and had

them off in a jiffy. He then proceeded to cover me up with two blankets and two zarapes each of which he laid on separately, tucking them well about me. It was quite different from having all put on together. Each one seemed to strike some particular spot, where it was most needed. Seeing him preparing to go to bed on the floor at my feet, I asked him why he did n't take the other cot; but he said he preferred the ground. I must have slept an hour when I heard a hammering on the door and a voice shouting, "Manuel! Here I bring a bed!" Manuel only grunted. I managed to strike a match, and in staggered Don Lucio, with a mattress, sheets and pillows. The rain had stopped and the kind-hearted fellow had brought me the best he had. I was so heavy with sleep I began thanking him in English. Of course I had to get up and have my bed made over. I was quite reluctant at the time, but was glad enough before morning, as it grew very cold.

When I awoke it was four o'clock. Manuel had started the fire and gone after the mules. It was still pitch dark when he returned with them, gave them their corn and commenced getting breakfast. Don Lucio soon appeared and prophesied a good day, which was encouraging. The animals were loaded up by the light from the fire and with the first streaks of day, we were ready to start. Don Lucio requested a *mañanita* (morning draught), and wished me *felicidades* as he drained the cup, assuring me that in him I had a friend. This I knew was so: that in future, whenever I passed that way, Don Lucio was good for a roof and a bed. Of course he expected some small favors in return, but they were as nothing compared with benefits received. In fact, I find the rule of the world is give and take; and Don Lucio's demands were modest ones. As he shook my

hand he said, "May God aid you in your journey," and with this kindly farewell we rode away. It was nipping cold, and I could hear the mules' feet break the ice in the little puddles that had formed in the trail. When at last the sun rose, I saw everything coated with frost. The tall, dry grass on either side of the trail seemed tipped with red, blue and yellow diamonds: every tree had a glittering mantle, and the blackened stumps were set with brilliants. We were ascending the mountain, and the valley back of us presented a beautiful sight. The mist lay close to the earth, a deep, intense blue: higher up, where the sun touched it, there was a bank of white fleecy cloud; and above that, the pine-clad mountain. Half way up the mountain we came to a little pool, close to the trail and quite frozen over. The first mule broke the ice with her nose and all the animals drank from the same hole. Gradually as the sun got higher, I began shedding coats and sweater; and by noon it was delightfully warm. We stopped for dinner near a little stream, and while Manuel was cooking I took a snap-shot at him. He had tied a red handkerchief over his head for the cold and had worn it all day. Manuel took the kodak as a matter of course. He said all the señores Americanos have *máquinas* (machines) and photograph their mozos cooking, walking and on horseback. While talking about the various Americanos he had traveled with, he cut a bad gash in his thumb with a beef tin he was opening, but he only took a pinch of earth and clapped it on the wound, refusing all offers to have it tied up. When we started again and I made for the trail, Manuel pointed off across the fields and gave me a *palo seco* (dry tree) to steer for. On reaching it, I saw the trail again; he assured me we had saved a good hour. Manuel was famous for short cuts and he con-

tinually left the beaten path for some special byway of his own. He said he grew up "walking in the mountains" and when I asked him how many times he had crossed them, he said, "quien sabe?" but he thought more than a hundred. When he was with the freighters, he wore sandals and walked all the way. But now that he was mozo he had shoes, though his sandals were tied on the back of his saddle; I presumed for the home trip.

He told me of a very important mission he went on once, when he was only fifteen years old. A rich man in Durango sent him to Mazatlan, with a belt filled with gold *onzas:* he did n't know how many, but it was heavy and he got very tired of wearing it next his skin, night and day. Besides he had *mucho miedo* (much fear). He bought his tortillas and beans at the ranchos in the daytime and took care to sleep in the open, where he was quite alone. When people asked why he hurried so, he said, "My father is dying in Mazatlan." He delivered his charge in safety, was given important papers and told to hurry back. He returned by another road and when the people, still curious, asked, "Why so fast?" he replied, "My father is dying in Durango."

We went into camp early the second night, after riding about ten hours. Manuel said it was too cold to sleep on the ground, and as we reached a rancho about sundown, I thought best to stay there. There was plenty of water, but no grazing for the animals, and I paid fifty cents each for small bunches of *hoja* (dried corn stalks). When I rode up to the hacienda, which was a forlorn barracks of a place, a girl was in the corral feeding chickens. I asked if I could have a room for the night and at first she said no; but finally pointed to a sort of shed, which she said was very dirty, but was at my

Mexican rurales

disposal if I cared to sleep there. Manuel had the packs off the animals at short order and began cleaning out the shed. The girl came and looked on, and, though shy, she could not seem to tear herself away from the sound of human voices. It seemed unusual to find a young girl quite alone in such a place; but her replies to my inquiries were evasive. The caporal and servants of the rancho had their huts at some distance from the main buildings; and not one of them paid her the slightest attention. I asked if she was not very lonely and she said yes; but that she was fond of animals and that she amused herself during the day, caring for the chickens and pigs; at night, a little girl from the servants' quarters came to stay with her, but she had not seen her all day. Quien sabe! Perhaps she was sick. I bought some eggs of her and gave her some tamales; and as she still hovered about our fire, asked her to eat supper with us. She accepted with alacrity, saying she had no fire herself; that the kitchen was full of pigs. There were several new families of young pigs, it seemed, and, fearing a storm, she had shut them all in the kitchen. She immediately began helping Manuel get supper, and fried the eggs in a deft fashion that made him open his eyes. Manuel fried an egg all right on one side; then he attempted to flap it over and the result was a strange mess, between a scramble and an omelette. She turned them as lightly as she would a feather, and transferred them to my plate, not overdone, but just right and good enough to eat. Then she brought from the house some little fried corn cakes, like diminutive doughnuts, which she warmed and presented to me. I was sure they were all she had to eat on the rancho except eggs. She refused to taste a morsel till I had finished, but flitted about, bringing me hot coffee and

more corn cakes, and keeping up a constant prattle, like a child who has been lonesome and is bubbling over with delight at finding companions. At last she bade me good night and promised to be up to help the mozo get breakfast, and to bring more corn cakes. She was a slip of a thing, certainly not over sixteen, untidy and wretched looking, but with a bright, honest face, and a kind, womanly heart.

The sky was clear and bright with stars, and I could hear the mules munching their feed in the corral and the blazing fire was pleasant; but Manuel, who was waiting to take my boots off, said, "It is time now to sleep," and I obeyed! He had fixed one blanket to his satisfaction and was putting on the second, when we heard wild yells and the gallop of horses' feet. The next moment there came a great banging on the door and a voice shouting, "Open the door."

"I go immediately," answered Manuel, "I am occupied at this moment." Then he put his finger to his lips for me to remain silent, and went on tucking in the blankets. The man kept on banging and yelling for admittance and Manuel kept saying, "Immediately, immediately!" At last he went and unbarred the door and said, "Walk in." Thinking that he knew what he was about, I adopted the rôle of the Gringo who does not speak the language and lay staring fixedly at them. The fire-light made the room as bright as day. There were three men in the party, and the spokesman was quite drunk; but the others seemed steady enough.

"You come out," they said to Manuel, and, as he hesitated they added, "You 're afraid."

"Not at all," said Manuel. "But I have no shoes on: to tell you the truth, I was just going to bed."

"Who is your *patrón?*" they asked.

"He is a señor Americano and we are going to San Dimas," answered Manuel, adding, "and he is very tired. But walk in."

"No," said the men. "You put on your shoes and come with us. We have plenty of mescal."

Then Manuel proved himself a diplomat of the first order. Oh, that he were free to join them! He did so like a paseo with good companions. But he was with his patrón and of course could not leave him. Some other time he should be only too happy. These honeyed words did their work. The bottle was passed and Manuel apparently drank long and deep. Then he stood in the piercing cold, in shirt and trousers only, barefooted and without a hat, bowing and saluting with true Mexican grace, till they finally got into their saddles and rode away. Manuel closed the door softly and barred it with extra precaution. Then he began choking and spitting on the floor. "How bad is this *mescal!*" he said. Then he proceeded to muffle his head in his blanket, and, leaving his feet to take care of themselves, went to sleep without more ado.

I was awakened by a rat who was making his breakfast off one of my boots. It was four o'clock and I called Manuel. There was a thick fog and it was dark as midnight. I always felt rather sorry for him when he started off at this hour, it was so intensely cold; but he did n't seem to mind it. I awoke from a doze and heard him calling, "Voy, señor" (I go) as though I had called him. It was the second time this had happened, and both times it had been at this dismal hour in the early morning. Before, when I said I had not addressed him, he looked scared; so this time I let it go and asked if he had all the mules: as though Manuel would come back without them all. He handled them

like kittens, with funny whistles and hissing noises which they understood. We made a quick breakfast on tortillas and coffee, as we had a long day's march ahead; and could barely distinguish the lines of the hacienda buildings as we started off into a sea of fog. Soon it began to grow light. We were ascending the mountains again, and we left the mist below us in the valley like a great inland sea. By nine o'clock we were reveling in sunshine and the glories of Mexico's mountains, with their lights and shadows, and endless vistas of blue-clad heights beyond. On the loftier peaks there was snow, and as we went up and up, it lay in patches by the trail, till we crossed the summit, about 10,000 feet above sea level, and dipped into another lovely valley. It was eleven o'clock and I was ravenous; so we stopped for almuerzo, as Manuel calls it, by a little stream, whose waters were clear as crystal and cold as melted ice, which they really were. Manuel concocted a remarkable dish of canned beef and breakfast bacon, which looked greasy and uninteresting but had a fetching smell, and a seductive flavor. I found oranges and lemons invaluable on this trip. They became ice-cold at night and retained the cold through the heat of the day. With a bit of sugar and a dash of tequila they made a delicious punch at midday; and at night, when the cold makes a fellow shake in his boots, this same punch, boiled over the coals, is a fine night-cap. The gordas and tamales were disappearing slowly but surely. They seemed an impossible undertaking, but one never knows how much he can eat till he gets into the mountains.

Soon after midday we took the trail again. The only human beings we saw that day were a woman and some children at a little hut. I took a picture of them, but could not get very near as they had already caught sight

of the black box and started to scamper away. There was no rancho in sight at sundown, so we camped under a big rock. I had a bed of pine boughs, and the pines formed a roof overhead. Manuel was busy cooking: he still had the red handkerchief over his head and was whistling for the first time. He seemed to like the open as well as I did. Ranchos are very well, but for real luxury, give me a supper by the camp-fire, a piney couch, and sound, sweep sleep beneath the stars.

CHAPTER XII

A Night at Hotel Japones: Fear of a Storm: An Early Start: A Mountain Rancho: Mountain Hospitality: Recreant Mules: Forlorn Indian Family: Charm of Mountain Travel: The Last Descent: "El Capitan": Manuel Sings as the Journey Ends: Magnolias: A Meeting With Bob: Home Again: The Holidays at the Mines: Serenade and Midnight Mass: The First Wheelbarrow: Christmas Dinner: A Mexican Ball: The Bandit Eracleo Bernal.

FROM the first rainy day, we had glorious weather; and Manuel said many times, "God favors us in the weather, señor." The previous night when I fell asleep it was bright starlight and the moon was just coming up. I awoke at two o'clock to find the sky overcast, and an ominous ring around the moon. At this season, rain in the low country is apt to mean snow in the mountains; and then one who does not know the trail is likely to go astray. The fire was smoldering and as Manuel was sleeping heavily, I got up and threw on a log, determining to let him sleep till three o'clock. When the hour was up I called him. He gave one glance at the sky and with a low "á Dios!" started off in search of the mules. Soon I heard them come thudding along: he had hobbled them all, and they hopped up to the fire and stood regarding it, like large, sad-eyed rabbits. Manuel gave them their corn and then began getting breakfast. In spite of the lowering sky and the prospect of a long, hard ride, there was a fascination in it all: the blazing fire, the towering rocks

and pine trees, the animals feeding, and Manuel brewing a fragrant pot of coffee. Beyond the ring of firelight, the dark forest, and probably not another soul within a radius of fifty miles!

When at last the mules were ready there was no sign of daylight. Manuel tied the two pack-animals together and struck off into the darkness, leading the foremost one. I brought up the rear, as I had not the faintest idea where the trail lay. We turned for a last look at our cheerful camp-fire and Manuel said, "Adios, Hotel Japones." This was Manuel's little joke. I asked why he called it the "Japanese Hotel!" and he explained. The night before when he was getting supper I suggested that he cut the plain tamales in strips and fry them in bacon fat, as they had become cold and soggy. I could see that he didn't approve of my scheme, but it proved a success; the result being the equivalent of fried corn mush. Manuel pronounced it *mucho muy bueno* (very, very good), and ate a great deal of it. He now informed me that *los Chinos* were excellent cooks; and that owing to our successful culinary achievements of last night, he had christened the camp, "Japanese Hotel." I started to explain to him that the Chinese didn't come from Japan; but at that moment the pack-mules went on different sides of the same tree. The hind one reared and broke away and I expected to see her bolt; but Manuel said, "Sh-h-h Mula bonita" (Beautiful mule), and she stood still. The damaged reata was repaired, and on we went in the darkness, climbing steep hills, descending hills that seemed steeper, crossing mesas and fording streams. I was wondering how Manuel could know where he was going when the mystery was explained. He asked me if I thought we were going in the right direction. I said I didn't know, but I pre-

sumed he knew the trail as well as I did the streets of Durango. He replied that he did by day, but that now he was relying entirely on his mule: that she knew the way perfectly, and that he was not guiding her at all, but letting her go as she wished. I asked if he thought we were right, and he said he did not remember the last hill; but that he could not be sure till daylight. Then he told me something that had happened only a short time before, showing how easy it is to get lost at night. He was driving a number of pack-mules, and stopped to fix one of the packs. Meantime the others wandered from the trail to feed. When he finally got them together, he was completely turned around, and search as he might could not find the trail. At last he unloaded his mules and hobbled them, built a fire, and sat there until morning, when he discovered the trail, within a few feet of where he was sitting.

It was so cold, we had to get off our animals and walk to set the blood going and when the dawn came at last, Manuel was still uncertain. He said we should be on the Guitarra Rancho and that when we saw mares and colts we should know we were all right. I told him when we saw them, he should have some tequila, and at sight of a band of brood mares, I got out my flask. "A long life and many boys!" I said to Manuel, as I swallowed a generous portion. Then I poured out some for him and the toast evidently had pleased him. He grinned and wished me happiness, and added that when I was ready to make the return trip, if I would only send him word he would come at once to fetch me. It did n't occur to me until some time after that I should have toasted Manuel's mule. At nine o'clock we arrived at the hacienda of "La Guitarra" and stopped to salute the señora, whom I had met on a previous journey. She

sent a young lad into the corral with two big earthern mugs, and he came back with them foaming to the brim with delicious milk; he had milked into the mugs. They told us we could barely make the Rancho San Miguel by sundown, as there was lots of snow before us and the going was bad. By this time the sun was shining and my spirits rose. As we got up into the mountains we found snow in abundance, and rode over it for several hours. It averaged three inches on the trail, and in many places it lay fully six inches deep. The mules were not afraid of it, as they had seen it many times; but we had to keep stopping to dig it out of their hoofs, where it formed hard balls, making them slide and stumble, and our progress was necessarily slow. Manuel said that once when he was with a pack train, the snow was so deep they had to go ahead with shovels and clear the trail. I snapped him with the pack-mules, as they jogged along across the snowy plain; and later in a picturesque cañon, where he actually shed his zarape for the heat. This latter picture was really taken for "El Capitan," my sturdy little mule, who would take the lead in the early morning and keep it till nightfall, never relaxing his gentle pace, till one of the pack-animals attempted to pass him, when he would strike a jog trot, and keep it up until he had distanced the presuming pack-mule. When I asked Manuel what his name was, he said he had no name, but they called him "El Capitan" because he always led the pack-mules, and would never resign his place at the head of the procession. "El Capitan" was a pack-mule, when he worked at his regular calling, carrying as high as eighteen arrobas (450 lbs.) so that his present job was a perfect sinecure.

We stopped for an early luncheon after riding seven hours. We were just getting through, when we heard

the cries of *arrieros* (freighters), and a pack train came in sight. The chief proved to be a friend of Manuel's. As they shook hands the latter exclaimed, "José, man, I bring thee good news. I saw thy father on Sunday: he was well and hearty." In return for this bit of intelligence, José pitched in and helped him load the *cargas*. He was a fine stalwart fellow, light enough for a Saxon, with big, honest eyes, and a face tranquil as a child's, utterly unmarked by the feverish struggle that stamps the dwellers in cities. He was a *buen muchacho* (good boy), Manuel said, and his pack-mules were a gift from his Mexican master, as a reward for faithful service. They shouted to each other, long after we had separated; and when the arriero's voice was scarcely audible, Manuel still understood and answered back.

During the afternoon, the trail became more and more precipitous, and the country was wildly picturesque. The rock formations in this section are wonderfully grotesque, and I believe unequaled anywhere on this continent, save in Colorado. In fact, I imagine we have little scenery to compare in grandeur with that of northern Durango, except perhaps Colorado, Yellowstone Park and the Yosemite. My first acquaintance with Mexico was in this state, and as I journeyed southward, though the scenery is very beautiful, I noticed a certain softness of contour that seemed almost tame, after the rugged mountains of Durango. On reaching one of the highest summits, we saw far off, on the brow of another hill, a lofty pile of rock that looked like the medieval castle of some robber-baron, with frowning parapets and countless towers silhouetted against the red sky. Manuel said it was "el Castillo de Chapultepec," where once lived the king of the Indians. I asked if he had ever heard of Cuauhtemoc, but he said he had not, and

asked who he was. Alas for the fame of the Aztec emperor!

Just as the sun was disappearing, we entered on a smooth tableland, where cattle were feeding, and knew our ride was nearly over. The cattle in these mountains have the finest, softest coats I have ever seen, a regular fur in fact. Many are black and white, and their colors are literally snow and ebony. The cows are wild-eyed and timid, quite different from the placid creatures we are accustomed to. Their udders are extremely small and they can seldom be milked without hobbling the hind legs. It is a funny sight to see a wild-looking ranchero, half-vaquéro, half-bandit, with pistol at belt, huge hat and jingling spurs, putting a rope on the hind legs of a cow, and then holding the pail on one side, while the woman milks from the other. I was revelling in anticipation of fresh milk and cheese, when we came in sight of the ranch-house.

The owners were two bachelor brothers, Don Blas and Don Luis, both kindly, hospitable souls. The former was away on a journey, but the latter gave us a most hearty welcome. The house was presided over by a sister, and there was a younger brother on a visit, with his sick wife and large family of children. Don Luis said the place was very lonely till the children came and he called them *"rayos del sol"* (rays of the sun). There was one rosy-cheeked youngster of five, who was forever clinging to his hand, and I could see that he and his uncle were great cronies. We had a delicious supper and then went and sat near the huge bonfire which Don Luis had built before the house. Soon I was glad to seek the cot-bed in Don Luis's room, which Manuel had made up with my blankets, and a little pillow in snowy, embroidered cover, sent by the señora.

Don Luis said there was plenty of snow ahead of us in the mountains, and advised an early start, that we might cross the last summit, which was frightfully cold at night, and get into the valley before sundown.

I called Manuel at four o'clock the next morning and told him to go for the animals. He said he was afraid of a fierce dog who guarded the house at night; so the good Don Luis dressed hurriedly and went out to tie up the dog. I was shaking with the cold in spite of my two heavy blankets, overcoat and sweater, and was glad enough to turn out and go to the fire which was soon blazing in the yard. I found some coffee and tamales and with the aid of Don Luis we soon had breakfast under way. The rosy-cheeked boy insisted on being dressed, and came and nestled under his uncle's great cloak. That boy had a bit of everything going. We were short of coffee cups, and he and his uncle had one between them: first the man took a sip and then the boy, and the cup went back and forth from one to the other, till it was time to fill it again.

It began to grow light and still no sign of Manuel. The sun rose and the business of the day began, but Manuel did not appear. Meantime I had ample opportunity to survey the premises. The house was the most comfortable one I had seen since I left Durango, with snug corral and outbuildings: and there was a tiny chapel of adobe, with a quaint little wooden tower, and a sweet-toned bell. Don Luis said he and his brothers built it: the padre came at most, twice a year; but it was always open on Sundays and when visitors were there. At half after eight, Manuel hove in sight, behind four innocent-looking mules. In spite of the fact that they were hobbled, they had managed to make a long distance on the home trail, and he had tracked them many miles,

Manuel with pack-mules on the snow. Altitude, about 10,000 feet

El Capitan

before coming up with them. Of course I could not blame Manuel; but I told him we would make a hearty breakfast and take lunch in the saddle, not stopping till we reached our destination.

While we were making ready to start, a forlorn Indian woman came to the house. She with her man and child had been caught in the snow, with thin cotton clothing and bare feet protected only by sandals. They were endeavoring to cross the mountains when the storm came, and had taken refuge in a cave near the rancho. The woman had a frightened look, like a wild thing caught in a trap; and the half-starved child clinging to her skirt was a pitiable little object.

It was nine o'clock when we took the trail, and soon we were on the snow again. Traveling was slow work, but I was determined not to spend the night on that cold mountain, no matter what the hour of our arrival. I knew the descent was hard and dangerous, but the moon was nearly full, and I hoped it would light the trail. Whatever the hardships of a ride in Durango's mountains, the delights more than atone for them all. I cannot describe the charm of those endless forests of pine, of the wonderful glimpses at intervals from the trail, of sun-bright valleys and distant, blue-veiled peaks, and the dazzling green of the pines against the snow. It is all too beautiful for words, and the most I can say is, it bestows a strange, dreamy sort of happiness, with forgetfulness of old troubles, disregard for what the future may hold, and the full power to live for and enjoy the present.

When we reached the last summit the sun was gone, but the moon was bright overhead. Then began the steep descent. "El Capitan" leaped, stumbled and slid in almost a sitting position, but he never lost his head nor

his feet. He knew that trail like a bag of corn and he was merely getting over it the easiest way. Manuel kept close behind and said again and again to one or the other of his pack-mules, "Mula bonita! Vuelva á trabajar!" (Beautiful mule! Return to your work!) In some places, the trail was light; but in others where the trees overhung, it was quite dark. I gave "El Capitan" his head, feeling perfect confidence in his ability to land me at the door of my good friend Don Jesús, whose casa was still several thousand feet below. As we went down and down, the air became soft and languorous, and occasionally the wind brought the strong, sweet odor of magnolias. Manuel began singing a plaintive air, in his soft Indian voice. It was the first time he had sung and for the moment I was vexed with him. As I have said before, I like a singing mozo. Then I thought of the reason. He was a mere boy, not over twenty-two at most, and all the responsibility of the trip, not only of the mules and cargas, but of our lives as well, had been upon him. No wonder he sang, now that the end of his labor was in sight. So we rode on through the sweet-scented air, Manuel still singing, till we entered the little pueblo of Carboneros and stopped before a white-walled cottage. Manuel called out, "Here is a señor!" and the next moment Don Jesús was shaking me by the hand. The supper table had just been laid in the broad veranda, and Don Jesús said I had come in good time. Soon we were seated and he was telling me of my friends only six hours away; how they had sent mozos for the last two days to the summit to look for me, and they themselves had waited at his house until nightfall. I felt tempted to ask for the loan of a fresh animal, and push on to join them; but it would be after midnight when I arrived, there was an arroyo that had to be

crossed twenty times, and besides I felt a bit shaky about the legs. It was the eve of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The main room had been arranged as a chapel, with an altar and lights, and trimmed with evergreens. The women were singing and their voices had a soothing sound. But I went to my bed reluctantly. Such is the unreasonableness of human nature, after two years' absence, those few intervening hours that kept me from my friends seemed interminable.

When I awoke the following morning, the sun was streaming into my room. I had slept ten hours; but I felt it was no more than my due after averaging as many in the saddle, for the past four successive days. Manuel looked rather sheepish when I found him in the corral, but I did n't say anything more severe than, "Andale!" (Hurry!) Soon we were on our way again, winding down the mountain. The scene was beautiful, with the note of industry supplied by a thriving mining locality. Below us lay the little town of San Dimas, and on the mountain side I could see the site of the famous Candelaria Mine which, since the early Spanish days, has produced incalculable treasures. Bob, who had now risen to the position of manager of the hacienda, met me on the trail. He had come out to greet me, and as we rode we recalled the events of our first meeting, of our stay in Durango and the ride over the mountains. Bob rode with me far beyond San Dimas, and then turned back with the promise that we should meet on Christmas. I spurred "El Capitan" across the arroyo, and with Manuel following close behind, set out on my last hour's ride to "La Puerta," where my friends awaited me. The remaining distance was soon covered and on rounding a bend in the arroyo I saw the quaint old hacienda, with the little church, abandoned for cen-

turies, and now converted into a charming American home. Don Alfredo and Doña Marciana awaited me at its hospitable portals,— but why attempt to describe a meeting with friends, than which I have experienced no greater happiness. We talked late that night, and dwelt long on those old days in the beautiful valley of Huahuapan, before I left the camp.

Christmas was now close at hand, and the Americans throughout the San Dimas mining district were preparing to make it, as much as was possible, a home celebration. In Mexico, as in all Catholic countries, the religious celebration begins on Christmas eve, which is called *Noche Buena* or "Good Night"; and it is then the country people seek the towns and cities. The highway from Mazatlan to the San Dimas mining district lies straight up the cañon of the Piaxtla River and the San Dimas Arroyo. This is during the dry season, when the river is low. In the rainy months, travelers must take the road over the mountains, which means a journey of nine days or more. The trip down the river is made in from three to four days. "La Puerta," where I was staying, is directly on the river; and all day on the Sunday preceding Christmas we saw the people coming from the pueblos farther down and from the mountain ranchos to San Dimas, which is a good three hours' ride above "La Puerta" and which is always the center of festivities. The well-to-do man and his family were on horseback; the señoras and señoritas in huge hats and muffled to the eyes in white linen rebozos, to keep out the heat. They were always accompanied by one or more pack-animals with trunks; for there was to be a ball on Christmas night, and the fair ones carried their party dresses with them.

The peones and their families were on foot, and as

they had to ford the stream many times, often where it was waist-deep, all were prepared for wading. Every man carried a pack, and it was not infrequently surmounted by a chubby child, who surveyed the sights with round, wondering eyes, from the vantage-point on its father's broad shoulders. The peones of this section are nearly all mountain men, and a hardy, rugged set. There are many bright, intelligent faces among them, often distinctly European in cast. Like all peones, they are trained to carry immense loads, either on their backs or balanced on their heads. When iron wheelbarrows were first introduced into Candelaria mine, in place of the leather sack, in which the ore had always been carried, a brawny peon was directed to fill a barrow, and wheel it to the ore patio. He piled it high with rock, eyed it dubiously for a moment, and then seizing it, lifted it on his head, and trotted away with it. Another peon carried a Burley drill, weighing in the neighborhood of six hundred pounds, from the hacienda to the mine, over a very steep trail that is covered on mule-back in about an hour. The hacienda boasts a piano, probably the only one that side of Mazatlan, which was carried all the way from the coast on the shoulders of peones.

When we arrived at San Dimas on Christmas eve we found it en fête; that is the shops were closed, hand organs were playing and nearly every peon had a bottle of mescal. The men were given full license until Christmas night, so long as there was no fighting. The worst that could happen to an inebriate was being conveyed to the jail and allowed to sleep it off, when he was at once given his liberty with the privilege of getting drunk all over again.

On Christmas eve a string band played on the plaza,

which is a wide street, one square in length, where the people promenade. This place also serves as theater, when a wandering operetta company comes to the town, a stage being erected at one end and a canvas stretched over the street for a roof. The audience bring their own chairs and primitive comforts by no means interfere with their enjoyment.

The band played till half-past eleven, when the bells began ringing for midnight mass. We found the little church full of people on their knees, and the altar boys engaged in lighting the candles. The band had preceded us and was playing the mass, which was sung by men and boys, some with very good voices. I preferred to remain outside, and watch the dark forms gliding from the shadow into the light that streamed from the church door, sometimes to enter, again only to kneel and cross themselves. Many were quite unsteady on their legs, but there were few, who could walk, that did not stumble at least to the door, before morning.

Christmas day was hot and all seemed inclined to save themselves for the ball. The people kept up their festivities, as they knew that at ten o'clock that night their holiday was over so far as carousing was concerned, and they must all be in their homes. The creatures are naturally such a mild, peaceful set, it is impossible not to like them. The danger comes, when crazed with mescal, a *disgusto* arises, and out comes the ugly knife. In San Dimas neither knives nor pistols are allowed, hence casualties are reduced to a minimum.

At four o'clock there was a dinner at the hacienda and eighteen people sat down at table. There were a Mexican, a German, an Englishman, a Hungarian, and Americans completed the party. It was hard to realize we were five days from the railroad, with such a varied

menu, and when the mince pie and fruit pudding appeared it seemed a sure-enough Christmas dinner. At six o'clock the ladies withdrew, and we organized an impromptu quartette, and sang old-time songs till at last they reappeared in simple, white muslin frocks. I doubt if the most elaborate ball dress ever created a more profound sensation. Imagine a typical mining camp, with all its accompanying dust and grind, and then set down in the midst a fair, winsome American girl, in a fluffy, puffy, fleecy white gown.

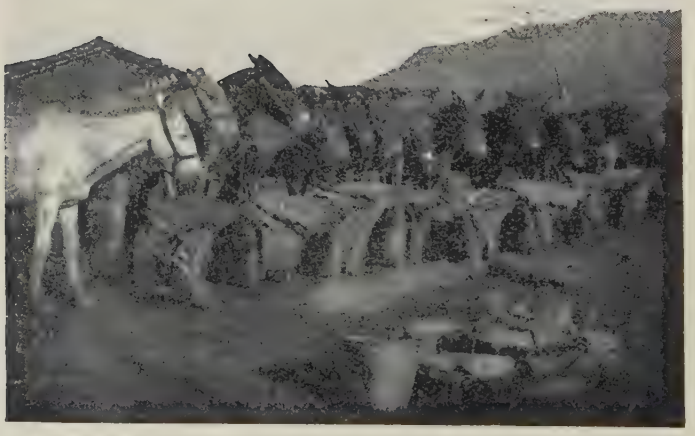
The dance was given in the school-house. The floor had been canvassed and the room was hung in transparent red, white and green stuff. There were masses of fragrant pine branches piled high in the corridor and before the musicians, and before the *cantina* (bar). There were lots of pretty Mexican girls and the music was excellent. The favorite dances were waltz, polka, schottische and the Mexican danza. The latter, which is also known as the "love dance," is thoroughly characteristic. The music is very soft and very slow. The youth holds his partner, presumably his novia, as though for a waltz, but the nearest approach to waltzing is a slow, gliding walk, which they keep in unison, sometimes seeming scarcely to move; meantime he gazes deep into her dark eyes and whispers impassioned words in her willing ear. The Mexican youths and maidens are fond of the danza and usually prefer this dreamy walk-around, to the livelier polka or schottische. Here the likings of the two nations are in marked contrast. An animated polka would strike up and the young Mexicans and their partners would begin slowly circling the room, while the Americans took the center and danced the glide polka. In some instances an American beguiled his or her Mexican partner into the same rapid step,

but I saw one fair-haired Northern youth slowly undulating in the danza with a señorita, and he seemed to have mastered it in every phase, even to the look in his eyes.

Refreshments were served throughout the evening and aided greatly in keeping up the enthusiasm, for it was a sultry night. At two o'clock the floor managers distributed little silken rosettes among the ladies, who were requested to attach them to the coats of the gentlemen with whom they desired the next dance. This was an innovation that met with no special favor at the hands of the señoritas. All their training had accustomed them to the very opposite course to anything in the way of overtures to the other sex. One bright-eyed miss, who had just returned from school where she learned English, did summon up enough courage to beckon a young American, and I distinctly heard her say, "Come here!" He lost no time in going. The other girls sat calmly holding the favors; and though the dance finally began and many of the men eventually wore the ribbons, they probably had to ask for them.

The party broke up at three o'clock, those who had remained going home together, with the musicians in advance playing *las mañanitas* — which are pieces played in the early morning after a party. On reaching the plaza they stopped quite naturally and struck into a waltz, and the music proved so alluring, we were beguiled into one more turn on the smooth pavement. Then "buenas noches" was said in earnest, the musicians playing until the last couple was out of sight. This seems a very pretty and complimentary custom but it goes even farther in some of the smaller pueblos. In one where I was staying a dance was given, and the young man who gave it went with the players to fetch his novia. They were

In the valley



Feeding the pack-mules

attended by the other young men of the pueblo, and then they went to the house of each girl in succession, the band playing all the time, until all were assembled, when they proceeded to the place where the dance was given. All the men carried pine torches and the sight was picturesque in the extreme. The same form was observed in seeing the girls home, but torches were no longer needed, as it was broad daylight when the dance ended.

San Dimas is one of the oldest mining towns in Mexico. It lies in the bottom of a deep cañon and is surrounded by mountains that tower over 4,000 feet above it. The exit to the coast is along the Piaxtla River. It has between twelve and fifteen hundred people. The men are a race of miners, and there are veterans among them who have worked in the "Candelaria" from boyhood. They occasionally try their hand at something else, but always drift back to the mine just as a sailor does to the sea. The barber, whose acquaintance I made there, told me his father and all his family had been miners; and though his present work is much easier, he still spoke rather regretfully of *la mina*. He was a bright fellow, about forty years old, and assured me he has never so much as left San Dimas: has never seen a locomotive nor the sea. To those who have traveled, such ignorance of the world is almost incredible.

The ores in all the mines of San Dimas run high in gold. The metal is shipped in bars to San Francisco, where it is sold outright, an assay being made and the gold and silver proportionately paid for. A bar weighs, on an average, seventy-six pounds. Before refining, it contains a proportion of baser metals; but there is also a percentage of gold, that raises its value as high as

a thousand or even twelve hundred dollars. The bullion is transported to Mazatlan on mules, one load seldom being over three bars, as a quick trip is desirable. A bullion train makes the trip to Mazatlan in from four to five days. The freighters receive five dollars a bar for carrying, and there is always return freight, at the rate of $7.50 a load, which is three hundred pounds.

In the old days, when bandits were thicker than flies in the summer, every bullion train was attended by a guard of soldiers. The owner of La Candelaria, whom every one addresses as "Colonel," told an amusing story regarding a threatened raid of the notorious Eracleo Bernal. This famous bandit had been committing depredations in the adjacent mountains, and San Dimas was in dread of a visit. One day some of the men employed at the hacienda came rushing in, their eyes bulging with terror and said, "Eracleo is coming!" He had just crossed the summit, they declared, and was sweeping down on the town, followed by his horsemen. The Colonel armed his little force, stationed reliable men on guard and then ascended a hill near by, hoping to get an early view of the enemy. Far up on the trail he saw a cloud of dust, but it didn't impress him as being made by a body of horsemen. He watched it for a long time and finally saw that it was a flock of sheep. The Colonel chuckled but kept mum; and the frightened people continued in such a panic of apprehension that even when they heard the bleating of the innocent invaders, it was hard to convince them that Eracleo was not at their heels.

The Colonel once came near meeting the bandit chief, under circumstances which might have proved serious. Finding it necessary to go to Mazatlan, at a time when travel in Mexico was rather insecure, he quietly made his

preparations for the trip, and set out with a trusty mozo, not telling even him where they were going. Secret as he was, though, the bandits got wind of it, probably through a spy in camp, who warned them of the departure. The Colonel, quite regardless of danger, rode ahead of his mozo, and eventually missed the trail, getting on the wrong side of the river. He discovered his mistake, but determined to keep on, feeling sure he should come out all right and that his mozo would rejoin him on the highway. He finally struck the trail and reached a hacienda where he spent the night. The mozo did not appear and he went on to Mazatlan without him. He had been there several days and was much perplexed to know what had become of the fellow, who had always proved faithful, when one morning he appeared. He was riding quietly along, he said, following his patrón, when he found himself surrounded by bandits. This happened on that part of the trail the Colonel had missed, when he crossed the river. On the mozo insisting that his master had gone on ahead, the bandits accused him of lying. They bound him, carried him into the mountains and maltreated him severely, trying to make him reveal his master's whereabouts; but becoming convinced at last that he knew no more about it than they did, they let him go. This was doubtless a sad disappointment to Eracleo, as the owner of Candelaria mine would have been a rich prize, and the bandit leader thought he had a handsome sum almost within his grasp. This same Eracleo Bernal, who came to be the terror of Durango mining camps, started life as a peon boy, in the region of Basis and Huahuapan. The people of the Huahuapan valley remembered him when, a towheaded boy, he carried the food to the men at work in the Huahuapan mines.

CHAPTER XIII

Seeing the Mine: Testing a Tenderfoot: Open Cut to Lower Level: Exploring Ancient Tunnels: Mysterious Voices: Castles in Spain: Something About the Peon: The Company Store: El Diablo and the Talking Machine: Marriage an Expensive Luxury: The Peon's Fondness for Children: Quaint Songs Heard in the Durango Hills: The Most Interesting Thing in the World.

THERE is an old saying about "small beginnings" that seems especially applicable to a mine. The beginning of a mine is a 7′ x 7′ hole in the ground. Its ending, however, is apt to be bigger. It may be a loss, but it is sure to be big. Often it ends in a fortune and the 7′ x 7′ opening leads to a great underground world, with miles of tunnels, shafts that seem destined to reach the earth's center, and thousands of workmen, toiling night and day. When I first visited a Mexican silver mine, I was amazed at its unpretentious beginnings. A mine that was historical, that had produced countless millions,— I could not believe my eyes when I saw the insignificant 7′ x 7′ aperture. That hole in the ground the entrance to treasure-land? Before I had gotten over my surprise, a train of ore cars, filled with ore and drawn by little mules, issued from the tunnel, dumped the ore on the patio and waited for us to get in. Then they galloped into the mine, a peon running ahead with a lighted torch. At intervals we passed cross-cuts, which presented endless vistas of lights. I heard the ceaseless rap-rap-rap

of the Burley drills and saw dusky forms gliding past, either going to or returning from a shift. Presently we met another train, with more metal, and still we kept on. I concluded the unpretentious hole meant more than at first appeared; and before I saw daylight again, I was sure of it. This was merely preliminary. The next day, the foreman asked me to go down through the mine with him, which meant to enter at the old works, on top of the mountain, and come out of the main tunnel, 1,500 feet below. We rode our mules to the summit, and turning them over to a mozo, went in at the great open cut. This was where the ancients commenced working the mine, running down on the ledge, and the tremendous, cavern-like opening seemed a fitting approach to such a wonderful treasure house. It was only in appearance though; for while every ounce of ore had to be carried up that steep ascent on men's backs, it is hauled out by the ton in the mule cars from the commonplace tunnel below.

At first, the descent was made by regular ladders laid against the perpendicular wall; but these soon came to an end, and I found myself climbing down what are known in mining parlance as *llaves;* a series of rounds placed horizontally, one above the other, at intervals of from two to three feet. They were slippery with mud and slime, and I found it difficult to keep my footing. We kept running into side issues in the way of cross-cuts and upraises: and the foreman, who wanted to see how they were looking, insisted on my seeing them too. There was compensation in going down the llaves, because every step brought me nearer the main tunnel and the mule cars; but climbing into upraises was quite another matter. We would haul ourselves up fifty or sixty feet over slippery cross-bars, to where a little

bunch of naked miners were at work, drilling into the hard rock. Sometimes we found them in good metal, and the foreman was correspondingly cheerful. At others, they were in waste and we left them hammering away, without a word. Once I made a misstep, missed the last rung of the ladder, and slid several feet in the dark. The foreman seemed disturbed and said that in three feet more I would have gone down an ore chute; but by this time I had given up hope of getting out alive, and the manner of my taking off did n't matter. I afterwards learned that this was one of the numerous chutes for conducting ore to the lower tunnel, and that getting into it meant a slide of 1,000 feet.

We did eventually reach the main tunnel, and I was listening for the mule-car, when the foreman remarked that of course I wanted to go down the shaft. Oh, yes, to be sure! We got into an ore bucket, gripped a wire cable, with bristling strands that stuck into my hands like cactus spines, and were lowered 500 feet further into the bowels of the earth. There were four levels, and on each men were at work, taking out ore. After looking over the lower level, the foreman rang a bell, the bucket was lowered again and we were hauled to the surface, just in time to catch the ore-train for the outer world. On the way, I saw quite an elaborate shrine in a niche in the tunnel. It was trimmed with paper flowers and much tinsel, and had candles that were kept burning night and day. When I finally alighted on the patio, it was with sore hands and aching legs, but with a great appetite, and best of all, the proud consciousness that I had seen the mine. This I remarked to the foreman. He looked at me pityingly and said: "You might spend a week inside, and then not see it all!"

Going through a mine, in operation and peopled by living beings, is not a circumstance to exploring one long-abandoned, and given over to bats and snakes. The noxious air seems devoid of oxygen, the bats circle about your head in droves. You eye the rotting chicken-ladders suspiciously, before trusting yourself to their support, and wonder where you would land if one gave way. The old Mexicans had the habit of running on the vein and taking out all the metal in sight as they came to it, only leaving pillars sufficient to keep the mine from caving. Hence their old workings are veritable labyrinths and they seem to have adopted the very hardest way for doing everything. If they ran down fifty or sixty feet on a ledge and found it in good metal, instead of running a tunnel in on that level, for getting out the ore, they preferred to carry it on their backs, up almost perpendicular ladders. I have explored a number of old tunnels whose age can not be approximated. They are fascinating and the chances of becoming a sort of "Monte Cristo" more so: but I never realized how much better the sunlight was than anything else in the world, till I first saw it after six hours in the gloomy depths of an old Mexican mine.

There are many pursuits connected with mining in Mexico besides exploring old mines. For instance, there is surveying. You go up on top of a mountain in the broiling sun to run a few lines, and send a man to hold the rod on a peak half a mile away. You have previously arranged a code of signals: if you raise your hand, he is to lift the target: if you lower it, he is to drop the target, etc., etc. When he gets in position, you look through the instrument and signal to raise. He promptly begins to lower. You wave frantically and yell yourself hoarse, but to no avail. You exhaust all

the profanity at your command, both in Inglés and Castellano; but he keeps on doing exactly the opposite to what you want him to. When you finally meet, you are amazed to find that he is as mad as you are. The sun was in his eyes, he could n't see your signals and while he has n't heard *your* expletives, he has been doing a little in the same line. Finally you both cool off and go back to try it over.

Then there is assaying. You go to the mine, where you are prospecting, and the head barratero meets you with a glad eye. He says the men on the night shift heard voices inside the hanging wall, and that the last blast brought them into good metal. These superstitions of the mining folk affect you mysteriously when you are looking for a bonanza. You inspect the face of the drift, and the barratero shakes his head wisely and says *"muy rico!"* (very rich!). You take numerous samples and it certainly does look well — lots of lead and bronze and a suspicion of gold. As you ride down the mountain, you begin picking out the best place for a tramway and speculate as to how big a smelter you will put in. Then your thoughts drift further, and by the time you reach camp, you have even spent (in your mind) a portion of the wealth that seems a sure thing. The sight of the assay furnace is a bit of a dampener. There is no romance about an assay furnace. It melts everything down alike and proves the "Survival of the fittest" and "Gold must be tried by fire." You set to work to prepare and make the assays. It is a long process, but the last stage is finally reached, namely, cupelling in the furnace oven. If that bead would only stop at the size of a good, healthy pea! But it keeps reducing. Now it is only medium, and now — *caracoles!* it is reduced to a pin point. "Castles in Spain"

Peon on ore dump rolling a cigarette

Water-carrier for the mine

come to earth with a crash and incidentally tram-ways and smelters. I have heard during the assaying process even more violent expletives than "Caracoles!" which is Spanish for "snails!"

The peones, in fact all the people who work in the mines, interest me. A Mexican miner's life is not so dreary as that of a worker in a Northern mine, a coal mine for instance. The Mexican miner is indolent, and no power on earth can make him work very hard. He is by instinct a rover. He may be comfortably housed, with fair pay and credit at the company store; but when the fever to wander is on him, nothing can keep him from going. If the family owns a burro, the household goods are loaded and away they go, over the mountains. Usually, however, the man carries the pack, with a small child seated on top, and the woman brings up the rear, barefooted and with a babe in her arms. This is the wandering Indian spirit, that will not be still, but leads the peon again and again into the mountains, and gives him a taste of fresh air and sunshine.

I like the Mexican peon, lazy and tricky though he may sometimes be. "His vices make up for his faults!" as the old woman said of an ingratiating and bad grandson. In reality the peon has many virtues that incline me to overlook his failings. He is always respectful and submissive, when not in his cups, and, for that matter, no man behaves any too well when drunk. Sunday is the peon's gala day. Then he puts on his snowy cotton clothes, if he is lucky enough to possess a change, throws his bright zarape over one shoulder, and goes to the store for his week's rations. He buys like a lord while there is a cent coming to him, or as long as the company will trust him. Next to hats, his weakness is for handkerchiefs. What he does with so many is a

mystery, but I consider his fondness for them a sign of refinement, to which the lower classes in some lands are strangers. Nor does he always buy red and yellow. I have been surprised to see him select a pale pink or delicate blue. Then he dumps into it his various purchases, beans, sugar, cigarros, corn or onions, ties them up snugly, and if he happens to think of something else he needs, buys another handkerchief to put it in. At the store he meets his friends and his slow and formal way of greeting seems a survival of ancient Indian and Spanish courtesy combined. He takes off his hat, shakes hands, and makes many polite inquiries as to the health of the family. He is generous to a fault; if he has still a few cents coming to him, and his *compañero,* whose credit is exhausted, wants cigarros, he cheerfully buys them and has them charged on his own account. The method of charging is unique. As few of the peons know figures, a system of simple characters has been adopted, that all understand. Each man has his pass book, in which his purchases are entered by the store clerks. A long straight mark means a real (twelve and a half cents). A short one, half a real. A cipher stands for one dollar and half a cipher for half a dollar. Strangely enough the V and X are used to indicate five and ten dollars. Thus the following OOIIIVX would stand for $17.38, the consecutive order of the characters not affecting their value.

At "La Puerta" no liquor was sold, but there was plenty of music, and with music the peon is happy. At times, he plaintively solicits "a few little drinks," but when the graphophone begins playing "La Golondrina," he forgets his thirst. It is funny to see his amazed look at hearing the voice of a man, singing or talking from the graphophone. Isidro, the foreman, was

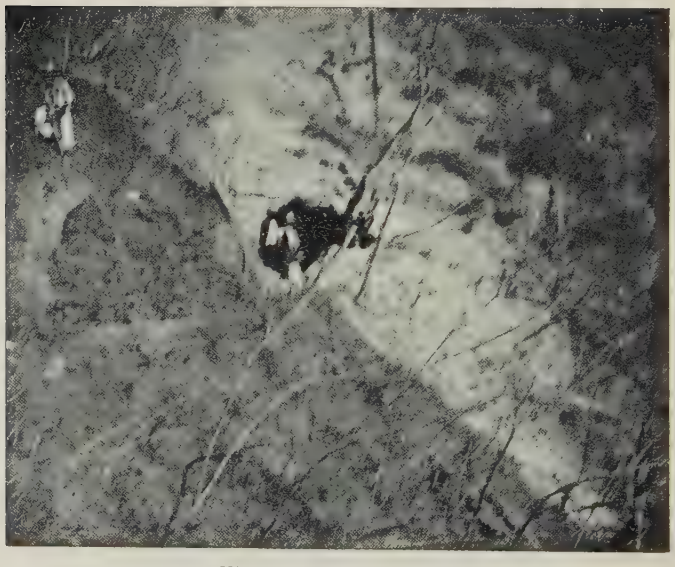
a faithful fellow and a true friend — a little inclined to take life easy, and with the vice of borrowing well-developed. One day, Don Alfredo, who was genuinely attached to Isidro, talked into a blank record, saying in effect that Isidro was very lazy and for that reason he could not lend him money. When Isidro came again to listen to the graphophone, it was playing a banjo piece and his face was wreathed in smiles. The music ceased. A gruff voice was talking: he heard his own name, he was *"un hombre muy flojo"* (a man very lazy). His eyes were big with fright and without waiting to hear more, he fled in terror. I heard that some of the men said el Diablo was inside the box, and I noticed they all kept a safe distance.

In the San Dimas district the peon earns a dollar a day. The barratero, or man with the bar or drill, generally works on contract, running the tunnel at a given price per foot, and earns anywhere from five to twenty or even thirty dollars a week, according to his ability, his willingness to work, and the hardness of the rock he is running through. He works with a compañero, one holding the drill, while the other strikes; and long before you come up to him in the blackness of the mine, you hear his monotonous sing-song chant, with the sledge keeping rhythmic beat. He is stripped to the skin, with nothing on save his breech-clout and sandals, and his dark, sinewy form is dripping with sweat. You come to a shaft, two or three hundred feet deep, and while you are holding on to the wall for safety and looking down the dizzy descent, a peon comes gliding along, with his leather sack slung on his shoulder, and trips lightly down the perilous chicken-ladder, as you would down a broad and easy stairway. A chicken-ladder is the trunk of a tree, with its branches lopped off, and notches cut in it

for steps. Peones prefer them to any other ladder. They say the American ladders hurt their feet. A peon will pick up a sack with a hundred and fifty pounds of metal, put it on his back with the strap across his forehead, and walk up a hundred feet of chicken-ladders without stopping to breathe. They are a slim, well put-up set of fellows, every ounce bone and muscle.

For the morals of the peon, I must admit they are lax, at least from our standpoint. With him, marriage was formerly an expensive luxury not often indulged in; but it is becoming more frequent, now that it has been placed within his reach at a nominal cost by the government. I have been surprised to find aged couples, that have lived their lives peacefully together and reared families, without ever having the legal or church ceremony performed. The women are hard-working, grinding the corn, patting out the tortillas, and doing their endless washing, down on their knees beside some muddy stream. Indeed, the peon is forced to take to himself a mate, in order to get his cooking and washing done. There are no boarding-houses for the Mexican peon, and the women can seldom be prevailed upon to cook for any save their own men. Indifferent though the peon is to the marriage bond, he is inflexible on the matter of baptism; and will carry his infant for miles over the mountains that it may receive the rites of the Church. If at any time he and the mother wish to separate, he willingly provides for the child, placing it with some of his own people. It seems a sad state of affairs, but among these people nothing is thought of it. A peon is not always as dull as he looks. I had this illustrated in talking with one, whose father and grandfather before him were born in the mountains. I was curious to know his idea about the first coming of the Spaniards, if indeed he had any such

Weighing the bead



The beginning of a mine

idea, of which I was not sure. He said they were very cruel to the Indians and forced them to work in their mines: that all they cared for was getting rich —" But," he added, " that is all the Americanos care for."

" That may be," I replied; " but they pay you for your labor, while the Spaniards made slaves of your people."

" It is true," he answered quick as a flash, " and for that we drove them out."

I was deeply interested in the songs of the mountain people. Doña Marciana's maid, Gumecinda, who had a soft, pleasant voice and had often sung for us, presented me with two songs, which she had carefully copied, with considerable labor I am sure. She was a faithful soul, entirely devoted to Doña Marciana, and had left her own pueblo of Huahuapan, two days across the mountains, together with all her kith and kin, to follow her young mistress. So far as her own race was concerned, she was among strangers. Her songs were different from any I had heard. The opening lines of one were the following:

Si supieras cuanto te amo
Fresca rosa, si supieras
Cuanto te amo flor divina,
El consuelo de mi alma!

Didst thou but know how much I love thee
My fresh rose,— didst thou but know
How much I love thee,— flower divine,—
Consolation of my soul!

The other song has a wild note both in the words and the music: it began:—

Dicen que por estos montes han de haber
Muchos tigres y leones á que cazar —

"They say that in these mountains there should be
Many tigers, many lions for the chase."

It was the sort of a song I could listen to for hours and made me think of one that always charmed me as a youngster and went:

"We'll chase the antelope over the plain,
The lion's cub we'll bind with a chain."

I asked Gumecinda where she learned this song and she said from a man in the mountains who was a great hunter, who used to sing it when he was starting away with his gun. He had the skins of various animals that he had killed, and with these he would disguise himself, so he could creep quite near his prey, whether deer or mountain-lion. She offered to teach me the song and I accepted, but I had slight hope of catching all its weird cadences. This same woman was once with us on a camping trip and would sing for us at night, when we sat about the fire. She always went and crouched by her mistress's side, with her face in shadow, and there she would sing by the hour; the mysterious night sounds in the forest lending a fit accompaniment to the low, melancholy voice. There was also a mozo with us who sang well, and on the day we were to break camp I was awakened long before daylight, to find him singing over the fire. He was making coffee and crooning a sort of farewell song. The camp was in a beautiful spot, near a ruined pueblo which had once been called "San José"; and I caught the words, "Adios, San José — Adios." I think he made them up as he went along.

I like to hear these people sing, especially in the night. At La Puerta they were passing all night long with pack trains, through the road in the bed of the arroyo.

I could barely hear the rattle of the mules' feet on the pebbles, above the sound of the water. One night, I knew from this pattering sound a train was passing; and then one of the arrieros began singing in a plaintive, monotonous, yet musical voice, something about "una mujer ingrata" (ungrateful woman). He probably was not at all sad, though his voice sounded so, and he liked the song so well, he sang it over and over, and I was sorry enough when he was out of hearing. I was almost asleep, when I heard it again. The train was crossing a ridge, a hundred yards below the hacienda, and the strain floated back on the night wind: "Esa mujer ingrat-ingrata."

If I were asked what interests me more than anything else, truth would compel me to answer, "people." It used to worry me, for I found it interfered with business. In Mexico, when I tried to get interested in mining, I would go to the mines, examine the ledge critically, pick up a piece of rock and look wise. Before I knew it, I would forget all about the mine and become interested in the people; the dark, silent men, hammering away at the flinty wall or gliding along the tunnel, laden with heavy sacks of ore. They were the nearest to beasts of burden I had ever seen in the shape of human beings and I wanted to know about them. Had their fathers ever been slaves and did they know this? Were the fine, Moorish faces that I frequently saw, a pure Indian type, or were they due to a Spanish strain? How many had Spanish blood anyway and what sort of people were their ancestors, before the Spaniards came? Some looked as though they had come from a line of cargadores with their huge feet and heavy limbs; while others were as trim and slight as a thoroughbred. I have seen a peon who could not write his name and never heard of Mex-

ico City, yet with a face and carriage that needed only the pitiable adjunct of clothes and a little coaching, to make him hold his own on Fifth Avenue, so far as looks are concerned: and a girl, whose only shelter consisted of four poles with a roof of brushwood, whose one accomplishment was grinding corn for tortillas, yet whose delicate beauty, in the right setting, would start a city raving about her. When I see such sights I can't help wondering about them, nor about a hundred other things that are none of my business. I used to wish I were different; but I finally gave in to the inevitable. I can't say I have been sorry and I have learned some things. I have seen conditions that have made me realize what a sad thing ignorance is; and I have recognized noble traits and sterling qualities in the midst of these same conditions, that have made our vaunted civilization seem a poor thing. The people that possess these traits I remember, and their portraits are in a gallery of my own with others that I have collected through the years; and the gallery never seems to become filled. The people are of all ranks and conditions, and of many different races: still there never seems anything incongruous in the way the portraits are hung. I think if I tried to define the quality they all possess and which, to a degree, makes them fit company, one for another, I should call it Truth.

I first saw Gumecinda in the little, isolated Indian pueblo of Huahuapan where they had never laid eyes on white people. No longer young, pure Indian in type, she still possessed something, whether it was her manner, her voice, her way of doing things, that made her different from the others. She lived with her aunt, an old witch of a thing, with an eye for trouble and an appetite for mescal. Here a virtue crops out between the afore-

said eye and the mescal. The witch gave Gumecinda a home because she was a relative. It would have been just the same, had she been worthless and good-for-nothing. "Blood is thicker than water." A relation must be cared for while there is a zarape to sleep under or a kernel of *maiz* in the corn-bin. It is the way of the country.

As it happened, Gumecinda was a much-prized member of the household. No one could make such good tamales, none such fine, snowy tortillas: no one could wash the cotton clothing in the little stream till it looked snow-white but Gumecinda. If a son or cousin had a sick wife in the mountain, who must go to nurse her and the little ones? Gumecinda, of course. She would pack her little bundle of herbs and remedies, muffle head and face in the voluminous cotton *toalle* (mantle) and ride away over the mountains, to stay till she was needed elsewhere.

I remember the first time we went to the witch's house. Gumecinda was seated on a mat, doing drawn-work. I saw that she was barefooted and then — presto — she had on shoes. How she did it I never understood. She made us welcome without a sign of embarrassment. She placed the one chair and a box for us to sit on, and for want of another box, spread a mat on the door-step, chatting easily with us all the time. Her voice was low and musical, and if her speech was unlettered, we at least did n't know it. She entertained us easily, naturally, talking of things most likely to interest us. I was amazed at first and then forgot my surprise and accepted it as a matter of course.

From that day, Gumecinda never changed. If we wanted to hear the songs of the people, she sang for us. If we wanted to see their dances, she hunted up a part-

ner, and with him went through the figures of the jarabe, her good, plain face radiant with the delight of dancing, and the knowledge that she was pleasing others. She was always ready to help in a hundred ways, cooking, sewing, or in case of sickness; yet she would never accept a cent of money. Gifts, yes — if her good friends wished, but not money. Unlettered, untaught, superstitious she was, like the rest of her people; but with an innate dignity and goodness, that shone through and obliterated all else. Gumecinda's portrait is in the gallery, and it is hung in a good light.

I can see Don Loreto now by just shutting my eyes. He lived in a place that had once been the center of a rich mining district; and his father, judging from the extent of the ruined hacienda with its fine orange orchard, must have been a man of no mean ability. Don Loreto was the funniest little body I ever met. The merest manikin in size, with small, regular features, quite an imposing mustache and chin-whisker, the littlest hands and feet, and short, fat legs, slightly bowed, that could never, under any circumstances, do more than waddle. Don Loreto spoke a little pigeon-English that he had acquired as a boy, in the days when the hacienda was in funds. When the weather permitted, he wore a superb cloak lined with old-gold plush, faced with red; and he would fling it over his shoulder with a telling sweep of the arm, extend one small soiled paw in the direction of the pueblo, and exclaim, "Oh, sir, you see all those people — they were once my father's servants!" He invariably began with "Oh, sir!" and ended with the rising inflection. He would add, that his father was a man, very powerful and much respected by his workmen. "When he held up one stick, all men fall down!" said Don Loreto. I never understood what he meant, but

always pictured the pueblo reverentially "deferring," like the populace in the "Mikado" at the approach of the Lord High Executioner.

Don Loreto once applied to a friend of mine for a position; he offered to look after his interests in a mining prospect, which happened to be near his own hacienda. He was engaged on the spot and on taking his departure said in a high and rather theatrical voice: "Oh, sir, when I am in that country, you will tell me what I want?" It was only a mistake of one word, the substitution of "I" for "you," but together with the high voice, the pompous manner, above all the funny little man himself, it was excruciating.

I once went on a long journey with Don Loreto, and passed the night at his mother's house. She was a dear old lady and though I am sure she had received few, if any, foreigners before, I was warmly welcomed and showered with kind attentions. While on the road, Don Loreto did his utmost to be entertaining, and he scorned to speak any language but English. I was once riding with him and he called my attention to some little red berries, much like our "pigeon berries," as follows:— "Oh, sir, do you see these little fru-its? These are too kind, these are too beautiful? All the ladies, when they see, will like to take a walk to pluck." Don Loreto had an uncle Juan, who was "too brave" and a very good shot. He was riding along with him one day, chatting pleasantly, when he suddenly saw a huge animal, coming down the mountain and making directly for them. He called his uncle Juan's attention to it, who said, "Oh, Loreto, that is one *oso* (bear). Excuse me one moment! I will kill it."

We got to know Don Loreto very well and to value him accordingly. His motto was, "Always kind with

all people," and he lived up to it. He had a good-for-nothing younger brother who seemed to embody the not inconsiderable ability and likewise all the badness of his line. He lived off the proceeds of the little man's labors and was ungrateful besides. We often counseled Don Loreto to set him adrift, but though he admitted the justice of it, he never did it. He was a happy-go-lucky soul, always looking for better days and eager as a child for amusement. When Christmas arrived and he heard of the doings in our tierra, with trees, stockings and what not, he was enchanted. The stocking part seemed especially to captivate him, and on Christmas morning he was invited in to take eggnog, and then led to the fireplace, where a long stocking hung, filled to the top, for him. He was as tickled as a youngster, and for the moment half inclined to believe in our strange *santo*. He would not take out a thing, but trotted away as fast as his fat legs would carry him, to open in the privacy of his own home and in the presence of his wife — his first Christmas stocking.

Years passed and though we often talked of Don Loreto, we never saw him until one day he appeared at the camp, riding a little podgy white mule, and attended by the bad but quite imposing brother. It is needless to say that Don Loreto was wined and dined and made much of. When dinner was over, he leaned back complacently and turning to his hostess said, "Oh, misses, we talk now of many things, but not of Christmas and the stocking." It was all so natural, the high voice, the rising inflection and all, that we laughed till we cried, and Don Loreto laughed with us, a trifle mystified, but delighted because we were. Then after many *abrazos* he mounted and rode away, the bad brother in the lead. I can see him now, bumping along on his queer little

American mine-owners

The camp mascots

mule, his face hidden by the enormous sombrero, his fat legs encased in very shiny leggings, and his gorgeous cape blowing out behind, "always kind with all people."

I once knew a mozo whose name was Jesús, and I refused to temporize by calling him either Juan or José. Just pronounce it "Haysoós," with the accent on the last syllable, and it will sound all right. Jesús was hotel mozo, and I met him about two minutes after my arrival when he brought my luggage upstairs, filled the water pitcher, and complimented my foresight in taking a room at the back of the house, with such a fine view. The landlord came and begged me to have a room on the street, with an interesting outlook on the white walls of the house opposite, and at double the price; but I politely refused to change and Jesús understood. I inquired if he took care of the rooms and learning that he did, made a careful survey of him, to determine into what sort of hands I and my belongings had fallen. I find it a good way to make up my mind regarding mozos on the start, and ever after be perfectly easy regarding my possessions, or else lock them up.

My summing up of Jesús was satisfactory, though he was a decided innovation in types. His skin was swarthy like an Indian's, but he had blue eyes, a shock of light brown hair and a broad, jolly countenance. He was short and stubby and his thick muscular legs seemed to have been literally melted and poured into the tight charro trousers. I speculated a good deal as to how he got in and out of those trousers, for his feet were large and substantial and did not look as though they would go through. I learned, however, that at night he merely lay down on the floor of the *zaguan* and covered himself with his zarape.

After deciding that Jesús was trustworthy, I con-

sulted him as to the advisability of leaving my room open at all times, for the entrance of sunlight, fresh air and the greater convenience of us both. I remarked that I liked it better so and that, of course, my things would be perfectly safe. Jesús, who could not say a word without acting it out, touched each eye with his forefinger, swept the room at a glance and said, "Don't worry." This understanding placed us at once on a confidential footing; and Jesús constituted himself not only general caretaker of my room, but master-of-the-wardrobe and body-servant in the bargain: at times his attentions were a bit overpowering. When I came in from riding he flew at me and had my spurs off before I was out of the saddle. He then followed me to my room, drew off my boots, brought another pair and seemed positively pained when I insisted on lacing them myself. If I went to wash my hands, he stood by with pitcher in one hand and towel in the other. This last performance always struck me as ridiculous but I concluded he had been valet for some luxurious and helpless individual who had exacted it. I finally asked him whose servant he had been, at which he informed me that he was a carpenter by trade and had never been servant to anybody. He had worked on the hotel, during its construction, at a wage of fifty cents daily; and then had stayed on as mozo, at "quien sabe que sueldo!" (who knows what pay!). This financial uncertainty didn't seem to worry him a particle. In fact I'm not sure that it didn't add to his contentment. As to his marked accomplishments in the serving line, I concluded they must be the result of his own genius.

I used to watch Jesús about his work, singing at the top of his lungs, and tried to take lessons in the art of being happy. I came to the conclusion that it consisted

mainly in having few wants. Jesús had enough to eat and a bed on the stone pavement in the zaguan. He owned a fairly good hat, a fine pink shirt with red lacings, a zarape and the irremovable trousers. What was there to wish for?

I found that of all my possessions, he regarded my camera with the greatest admiration; and when I worked with my pictures he hovered about me like a shadow. He was specially pleased with a photograph of the church, and as I found he was quite devout, I resolved to give him one. I had several laid aside with other photographs, but when the day came to continue my journey and I looked for them, there was not one to be found. I searched high and low without success, and then suddenly my mind reverted to Jesús and his excessive admiration for the pictures. I hated myself for harboring a suspicion of his honesty; and resolutely put the thought away. Still I wondered about the pictures, and at last caught myself endeavoring to condone the offense, telling myself that the poor fellow knew no better, and that in his fondness for the church he had innocently appropriated one; perhaps it was for his novia. But there were several pictures and what could he want with so many? At last I started to unpack my trunk and make a last thorough search, and safely tucked away, in a most improbable corner, were the pictures, put there by my own hand in a fit of abstraction. I felt small enough and when Jesús appeared, with his usually beaming countenance a trifle serious, on account of my departure, I felt tempted to beg his pardon. On second thought I refrained, and presented him with several packages of cigarettes. When he had corded up my trunk for the second time that morning, he came and stood by my chair and humbly asked if I would do him

the favor to give him a *fotografía* of the church, as a remembrance. For reply, I handed him one of each photograph I had made in his tierra. Then as he stood radiant, expressing his *gracias* in the voluble way of his people, somehow a portrait of Jesús found its way into the gallery. I am glad it is there and the experience it recalls has taught me a lesson.

One night, while wandering at dusk, I found myself in what we familiarly term a blind alley. I think the Spanish word *rinconada* means the same thing. I was turning to go back, when a girl began singing in a house at the end of the street. Her voice was strong and pure, and she sang as though her whole heart was in the song: "Blanquisima paloma, consuelo de las almas —" which means, "Whitest of doves, consolation of souls." Then she stopped. I waited, wishing she would go on, and presently she sang the same words over, with an added line I did not understand, and then stopped again. I judged that she was at her work, sewing likely, and fancied her bending over it in the intervals. I was thinking what a pity it was women's voices were never heard in the churches, when she took up the song again, and this time went through several phrases without stopping. I waited a long time for more, but there was not another note. People were passing back and forth, entering and leaving other doors, but no one paid the slightest attention to the mysterious house from whence issued the lovely voice. I began to grow impatient and besides to feel an overwhelming desire to see the singer. There was a bright light in the room and the window was shaded by a half-curtain of coarse white muslin. I was sure the voice was just back of that curtain and I began to edge closer. All at once she sang again, this time with deeper fervor, as though she

loved and believed the words, "Blanquisima paloma, consuelo de las almas—." "Now," thought I, "she will sing it all;" but instead of waiting, content with the song, I kept on till I reached the window. How she knew I was there, I never understood. She was sewing and she did not lift her eyes. She could not have seen me in any event, as it was quite dark outside. Still I knew, from the look that came over her face, she would not sing any more. She was a girl of the middle class. I shall not try to describe her, as I don't think such descriptions ever amount to much. I know she had on a black dress, that her face was pale but very beautiful, and that she looked good. I stole away from the window and waited for the song to go on; but it never did, and I finally walked away thoroughly vexed with myself for not letting well enough alone, which nobody ever does.

CHAPTER XIV

A Mountain Flood: Swimming the Arroyo: Dangers of Mountain Travel: Arrival of the Mail: The Life of Don Blas: The Silent Horseman: A Night at "Pig Gulch"; Electrical Storm in the Mountains: A Dream City: It's a Long Ride that has no End.

ALL the mining men in the San Dimas district were longing for rain. The mills are run by water-power; and as the creeks were very low, there was immediate prospect of shutting down for lack of water, which means a daily loss of thousands of dollars. It threatened to rain every night with the usual warnings of heavy, black clouds and a ring around the moon, which had a greenish-yellow look, but still the rain held off. Every morning big clouds floated on the horizon and the sun broke through with difficulty. Sometimes there was a mackerel sky, and then Isidro, who always talked by signs, would cock his eye heavenward, nod mysteriously, and holding his hand, palm downward, wriggle his fingers in a way to suggest falling water: still it did n't rain. Every evening at sunset, when the wind blew up the cañon, hurling clouds of sand and dead leaves right and left, we said, "It will certainly rain to-night!" and then the night would come soft and clear, with a starlit sky. February is late for heavy rains and the miners began to despair. They found some comfort telling me how the flood had acted in previous years; how the waters roared till they could n't hear each other's voices, hurling great logs

along with the speed of a mill-race, tumbling immense boulders down stream like so many pebbles and shutting off communications with the other camps for weeks. The little San Dimas arroyo was a raging torrent, and the river, with which it unites just below the hacienda, an angry sea. The placid *charco,* where we went swimming, became a lake, with a forty foot dive off the rocks, and catfish galore for the mere casting a line. Then they added consolingly, that although I had missed it, I should doubtless see it all another time.

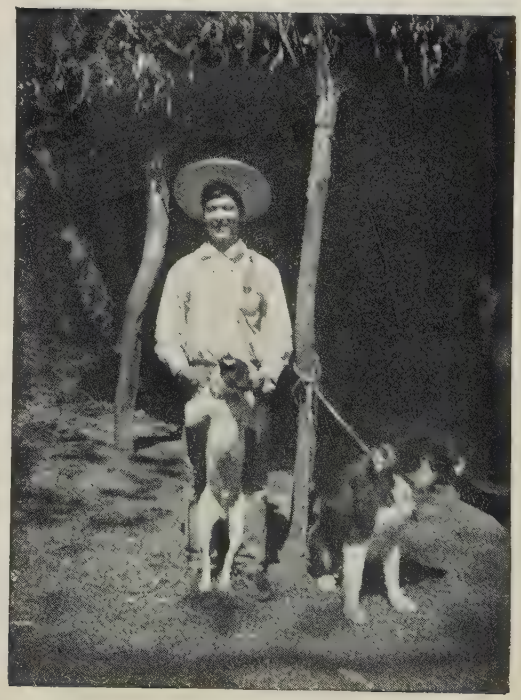
The wind had been hot and dry all day, and there were more sand and dead leaves than usual in consequence. We had become used to disappointment and though the skies were dubious, we only said in disgusted tones, "But it won't rain!" At nightfall it began to sprinkle in a half-hearted way, and those who knew the signs said it meant a storm; but I remained skeptical and went to bed without giving it a second thought. Once or twice I woke in the night and heard the rain striking the corrugated iron overhead, but even then I did n't realize what it really meant. My morning doze was broken into by a great banging on the window shutters, and amid the deafening roar of the waters I heard a voice shouting, "Get up and see the flood." I flung the shutters open and, though it was barely light, I could see that the arroyo, which the day before I had crossed on stepping stones, at most ten feet wide, had been transformed in a night into a mighty river, filling the bottom of the immense cañon, which at that point was nearly two hundred feet wide. The water was running easily fifteen miles an hour and I could hear the constant bumping and feel the jar of the big rocks as they were dashed against the foundations of the hacienda.

As it grew lighter, we saw the river, which was

grandly beautiful, with trunks of immense trees riding its billows. A steady drizzle was still falling, but the delights of such a day, coming after a long spell of hot dry weather, were not to be withstood. Everybody cautioned everybody else to beware of *calentura* (fever) which was prevalent in those parts, but no one stayed indoors. First there were all the animals to be visited. The mules were huddled together in a sad group under the fodder-stack, and the cow stood gazing dejectedly at her offspring, who, though safe under cover, was bawling frantically. Even the pig's monologue had assumed a cynical tone: the roosters were trailing their bedraggled tail-feathers, and the doves, who had persistently shunned their comfortable little houses, preferring to roost on the ridge-pole and coquette with the stars, were so benumbed from the wet and cold, they could scarcely fly or even walk without pitching over. Many an unfortunate found his way to that refuge for feathered invalids — the kitchen. The dogs had the best of it for while they were supposed to be on guard at night, I was sure some of the peones, who were fond of them, had harbored them during the worst of it. They were jubilant in consequence leaping upon us with their muddy paws. And the pet burro, whose name was "Johnny," did what he could, braying dismally all day at ten-minute intervals, in tones that sounded more than ever in need of scraping and oiling.

The mines were on the opposite side of the arroyo from the town, and the workmen were shut off from their supply of tortillas and beans. There was no way to get food across the river, and I doubt if the women would have found time to cook in any event, they were so taken up watching the flood. The men refused to

The foreman of the mine



The storekeeper

work on empty stomachs and besides they wanted to see the flood too, so they came trooping down from the mines. By noon they were ranged up in lines on the opposite banks, the women on one side, the men on the other. It is on such occasions the sign-language demonstrates its superiority over all others. In spite of the noise of the water, those Indians talked across the arroyo. I imagine the gist of what was said resolved itself into "I'm hungry!" on one side and "Come and get your dinner then!" on the other. At last a venturesome young peon decided to make the attempt. It was an exciting moment as he stripped off his loose cotton clothing, and stood, slender and dark, on the edge of the torrent. He leaped in and tried at first to wade but the current swept him from his feet and he disappeared. Where was he? Would he be dashed on the rocks? No, there he was swimming down stream, his dark head just showing above the foam. He landed fifty yards below and made for the town, where a pair of brown hands was already patting tortillas against his coming. One quality is never at a discount, be the owner high or low; it is courage and that peon boy had it. By night, the water had gone down sufficiently for wading, and the men were crossing in droves, carrying their clothing on their heads. Some of the weaker ones were afraid to try it, as the current was still tremendous and the water came to the arm-pits; and these, the stouter ones carried over on their shoulders.

I was prepared for a change the next morning, but not for the one I saw. From a river, close on to two hundred feet wide, the arroyo had subsided into a trifle over its usual width; but with an added volume and velocity that suggested sufficient reserve to last a long time. The water was ice-cold and we hoped that it

came from melting snow, which would assure its continuance.

The havoc that a small and apparently inoffensive mountain stream can create in a night, aided and abetted by the innumerable smaller ones that are its tributaries, is incalculable. Every rill contributes its mite and the united water of hundreds of rills soon constitutes an irresistible torrent. Woe to the unlucky mill owner, whose works happen to come within the danger line. A few years ago, this same arroyo carried away an entire pipe-line and its bed is still strewn, half-way to the coast, with sections of iron pipe: while a huge boiler, four feet in diameter and sixteen feet long, was whisked away like a stick of wood. After a long and fruitless search, the owners concluded it had gone out to sea; but several years later, the water uncovered it where it lay embedded in the sand, over three miles down the arroyo. The precept for mill owners would seem to be, "roost high!"

While a mountain flood frequently subsides as quickly as it came, its havoc makes travel dangerous for weeks afterward. As a result of the present flood, our mail was delayed for two weeks, and the waiting seemed interminable. I have known tense moments, but none that surpasses the arrival of the mail in lonely places, which for weeks have been isolated from the rest of the world by the floods: shut off by the impassable mountains. It is then the mountains dominate us and silence our pretentiousness. Like the ocean, they are immutable and relentless. We know that though every human tie we possess is calling, it cannot reach us, for it is death to attempt to cross the mountains in time of flood. At last the mail arrived, carried by a mozo on mule-back, and Doña Marciana, after giving him a quart

of hot coffee, assorted and distributed the letters as was her custom. I recognized the writing of a New York friend, with the postmark "Mexico City." In his letter he said that he had sailed from New York four weeks since, having decided to pay me a visit, and that he was then in Mexico City. He hoped I would return there at once or send for him. I consulted my friends, but they said it was out of the question; for only the most intrepid and experienced mozos could get through alive. Again I felt the thrall of the mountains. But we chafe under the limitations imposed by nature, and I began to long for Mexico City and felt impelled to return there,— the more so on account of my friend's visit.

I have found that the success of an undertaking, whatever the obstacles may be, is furthered by the deliberate beginning of preparations; and though my friends were doubtful as to how soon I could safely begin my journey, I engaged a mozo and pack-animals and began to get my outfit in shape. I was scarcely ready when, the weather having changed abruptly, the mail mozo assured me the trails were passable and the streams low enough for crossing. It had been decided that I should ride Don Alfredo's mule, "Queen"; and while I hesitated to accept his kind offer, the prospect of four days astride such an excellent saddle-animal was irresistible. In the mountains, the loan of a man's rifle or of his mule is the test of unselfish friendship. This mule was gaited like a horse, with a fast trot and an easy gallop; and as the mozo was well-mounted, I hoped to make Durango in four days, which was record time. Our first day's ride should take us to the rancho San Miguel, and it was my intention to sleep there.

The ascent to the summit took the entire forenoon,

and after a hurried lunch and brief rest for the mules, I pushed on over the level mesa, in the direction of the rancho. At sundown we were still in the pines, and my mozo wanted to go into camp, but I had several reasons for wishing to sleep at the rancho. First, it meant that we had covered the distance allotted for a good day's riding: and second, I had heard the praises of Don Blas, the brother of Don Luis, from my friends in the mines, and I was determined to meet him and make his acquaintance. The dusk that had pervaded the pine forest was now dispelled by the moon, and after two hours' fast riding we reached the rancho, and to my satisfaction Don Blas himself came out to welcome me, and to place his house at my disposal. Don Luis and the other members of the family were grouped around a big fire in the yard, with their zarapes about them; but Don Blas was in his shirt-sleeves, his ruddy face and portly figure seeming to set at naught the nipping night air. I was glad to go to the fire and when the saddles were off the animals I told the mozo to get supper, but Don Blas had other plans. He said that I must partake of *tantitos frijoles* (a few beans) with him; so we went into the cozy little dining-room where the table was laid for two. The supper consisted of delicious frijoles, flaky tortillas and coffee. My provision box was crammed with good things, but something in the port of Don Blas told me that to suggest opening it would be as ill-timed, as it would were I supping with the President. Don Blas had some of the good things later, but they were offered with due reference to form. I found that my estimate of Don Blas was right when we came to settle accounts. Not one cent would he take except for the corn, which he really had for sale. His "No, señor" meant "No." Of course there

is a "No," that really means "Yes"; but the "No" of Don Blas was not of this breed.

Before the evening was over, he told me his history. He was the oldest of a large family. His mother died in child-birth, but her sister came to mother the family, and in those days there was plenty of money, his father owning a large rancho stocked with sheep and cattle, and a silver mine. Then the father died. The property was left in charge of a near male relative, who, after the manner often peculiar to male relatives, proceeded to appropriate it entirely to his own ends. The good aunt, with her brood of orphans, found herself penniless and naturally turned to Don Blas, who was then fourteen years old. His one accomplishment was playing the harp, and when the people found he would play for money he was summoned from far and near, to make music for dances. "I always played with great gusto, but when they got drunk, it frightened me, and I hid among the women," he said. Music brought but little money and Don Blas tried his hand as baker, cook, and store boy, while the good aunt took in sewing and washing and together they kept the wolf from the door. Finally his love of the mountains and an out-of-door life led him to become an arriero or freighter; and he now owned his own mules and outfit, and the little rancho where he enjoyed life when not on the road.

I asked Don Blas why he had never married. He said he had always been too busy, first taking care of his young brothers and sisters, and later of their children. The rancho was then overrun with small nieces and nephews and judging from the resounding smacks I heard him giving them, when they came to say, "May you pass a good night!" they were like his own children to him. "I have always been content in seek-

ing a living," said Don Blas. I fancied his contentment was mainly due to the fact that he was living for those rosy-cheeked youngsters who were forever hanging about him. In nearly every family, there is one who far outstrips the others in gaining this world's goods; but I believe it is rare in other countries for the successful one to take upon himself the care of his entire family, as so often is the case in Mexico.

We were in the pine woods the greater part of the next day, and our progress was slow owing to the bad condition of the trail, and the great number of fallen trees, which often lay in our path, compelling us to ride around them. The streams were deep and care was necessary to cross them safely. Throughout this journey, the mule, "Queen," showed rare intelligence. Though nervous and easily excited, she was gentle and kind. As is usual with thoroughbreds, her skin was delicate, and I found the saddle was chafing her — or rather she informed me, by rubbing her nose against my leg. I got off and shifted the saddle, and from that time, whenever her back hurt her, she gave me notice in the same way; yet gently and with the utmost patience.

That night we camped in the valley, and while the mozo was cooking supper, I bathed Queen's back and rubbed it with liniment. As I was eating my supper, a young peon appeared from out of the darkness, and taking off his hat, asked if he might sleep by the fire and then walk with us to Durango, saying he would help with the mules. He was a gentle little lad, and my mozo was pleased to have a companion. After they had eaten supper, they began singing. They came from the same part of the mountains, it seemed, and sang the same songs. I soon fell asleep, lulled by their soft agreeable voices.

The singer

Doña Marciana on the trail

When we started, the following morning, I feared the boy would not keep up, but he was light and swift as a deer. Sometimes he would vanish and I feared he had given out; but to my surprise he would be waiting for us ahead on the trail. This he managed by crossing the ridges, where the trail went around them; and this method of travel is common among the Indians when on foot.

I was riding across a beautiful piece of meadowland, when from the pines that skirted it, a man on a white horse emerged and rode toward me, his horse's hoofs making no sound as he glided over the springy turf — a silent horseman from out the silence. As he came near I recognized Gregorio, who was one of our most faithful miners in the old Huahuapan district. We had not met for more than a year, and of the two, I was the more moved by our meeting. Riding beside me, he lifted his hat, gave me his hand, and made inquiries for Don Alfredo, Doña Marciana, and Gumecinda. Then he asked when he should have the pleasure of seeing us "there,"— meaning Huahuapan. I recovered my manners sufficiently to say that I hoped it might be soon, and after shaking hands again, he gravely lifted his hat, and rode silently and swiftly away. I have often wondered at the serene poise of these people; I think they have become imbued with the calm of their own mountains. I doubt not if Gregorio and I meet in ten years, for any demonstration on his part the interval will seem as a day.

My last night in the mountains was spent in an interesting spot called Charco Puerco (Pig Charco), its one redeeming feature being that it was near Durango. It had rained in the afternoon, and though the sky was clear when I turned in, the wind was blowing a gale, which

grew more violent as the night went on. I had heard all along the road of the recent hurricanes and had never before seen so many fallen trees. When I finally fell asleep, the pines overhead were lashing about like whip-cords. I awoke at one o'clock. The sky was black with clouds, the wind had subsided and it was beginning to rain. At two I called the mozo. Meantime it had begun to thunder and lighten and by the time the pack-mules were loaded, there was a sharp electric storm under way. Streaks of fire were darting across the sky, the thunder was pealing on all sides, and the rain fell in sheets. I was again anxious about the young peon, but he was as cheerful as possible, and trotted along beside the mozo's mule. I had them take the lead with the pack-mules, and though I could only see them when it lightened, I heard the steady splash of the mules' feet as they jogged along the muddy trail. I hoped the weather would change for the better at daybreak; but it grew cold and the rain turned to hail. It evidently hurt the mules and they refused to go, except under liberal persuasion. The ground was soon white and from that time, for nine hours, it rained and hailed alternately, with the most glorious electric storm I ever experienced, and with dazzling bursts of sunshine in between, that lasted at most ten minutes at a time. Then great masses of clouds would dart up from the horizon, the sky would grow black in the twinkling of an eye, and the storm would begin again.

I passed a burro train laden with heavy timbers. The Indian boy who was driving them was a sorry looking object, but as I came up to him, I heard the familiar strains of "La Paloma" and found he was playing a mouth-organ. He was covered with mud and the water was running off his soaked sombrero upon his more

soaked zarape, but if facial expression meant anything, he was perfectly happy.

The first glimpse of Durango, as I approached it from the mountains, was wonderful. I was riding across an extensive mesa, thinking of nothing in particular, when suddenly I saw it, lying away off over the tops of the intervening mountains, veiled in ethereal blue like a mirage, a dream city. This time, though I was riding in the rain, the sun was shining on the cathedral towers, and the city seemed to rest on the clouds, which were piled below it and all about it. It was my promised land, yet near as it seemed, it was still a good four hours' ride away. "Queen" saw it as quickly as I did. She was a Durango mule, but had not seen her native soil for three years. She was dead tired, but in the same instant that I discerned the city, she pointed her ears inquisitively, and struck into a smart trot. When we lost sight of it, she lagged, but on a second glimpse, up went her ears and off she trotted. When she was bought in Durango, she had for stable mate a white horse, and mules are fond of horses. When we struck the highway, leading into the city, we found it heavy from the rain, and I vowed I would not touch her with the spur if she walked all the way to Durango. Suddenly a Mexican passed me at a gallop on a white horse. She pricked up her ears, whinnied, and started off at a lively trot again, never quitting it till we entered the city.

It is a long ride that has no ending. This one had meant fourteen hours in the saddle without a halt; but presently I found myself before the hotel, with the amiable mozo, Leon, grinning in the zaguan. With his kindly assistance I was soon in bed, and after a bite to eat and an alcohol rub, I fell asleep, to wake the next morning "as fit as a fiddle." After settling accounts

with the mozo, I went to the corral to take leave of "Queen," who was to return with him to the mines. The other mules had freight to carry home, but "Queen" would frolic along the trail without so much as the weight of a saddle. She received my farewell caress pleasantly, and when I called her "Queen of Durango Mules," did not demur.

That night, when I took train for Mexico City, it was with a feeling of contentment. I already anticipated anew the pleasant life of the capital. But underlying all, for future solace, was the thought of my late journey, — of other journeys, however distant, over Mexico's illimitable mountains.

Two ties unite my heart to Mexico — first, love of friends; last and always, her mountains.

> Rough-piled, far-flung, unending, range on range;
> And still beyond all wrapped in purple mist,
> Are mountains dimly beckoning. . . .

THE END

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